

A Song-Book  
of the Soul

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MAIN





Signed.

Agnes A. Kinloch  
from her affec<sup>ate</sup>  
mg. gr. Kinloch

---

Feb 7 16<sup>th</sup> 1896.

A SONG-BOOK OF THE SOUL.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

## A HISTORY OF SCOTLAND

CHIEFLY IN ITS ECCLESIASTICAL ASPECT.

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# A Song-Book of the Soul

BY

MARJORY G. J. KINLOCH

AUTHOR OF

"A HISTORY OF SCOTLAND CHIEFLY IN ITS ECCLESIASTICAL ASPECT"

"Scribe, lege, canta,  
geme, tace, ora ;  
sustine viriliter contraria :  
digna est his omnibus et majoribus praeliis vita aeterna."  
DE IMITATIONE CHRISTI, cxlvii.

LONDON

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1892

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**Matri et Sororibus.**

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THE writer desires to ask forgiveness on two accounts. First, for the title she has given to a little book of humble lyrics ; secondly, for having placed, side by side, subjects so sacred and so common-place. If fault be found with the arrangement of the verses, the writer ventures to refer to the teaching of two poets now at their rest. The one says, "yet set not in thy thoughts too far our heaven and earth apart," and the other assures us that "our common air is balm."



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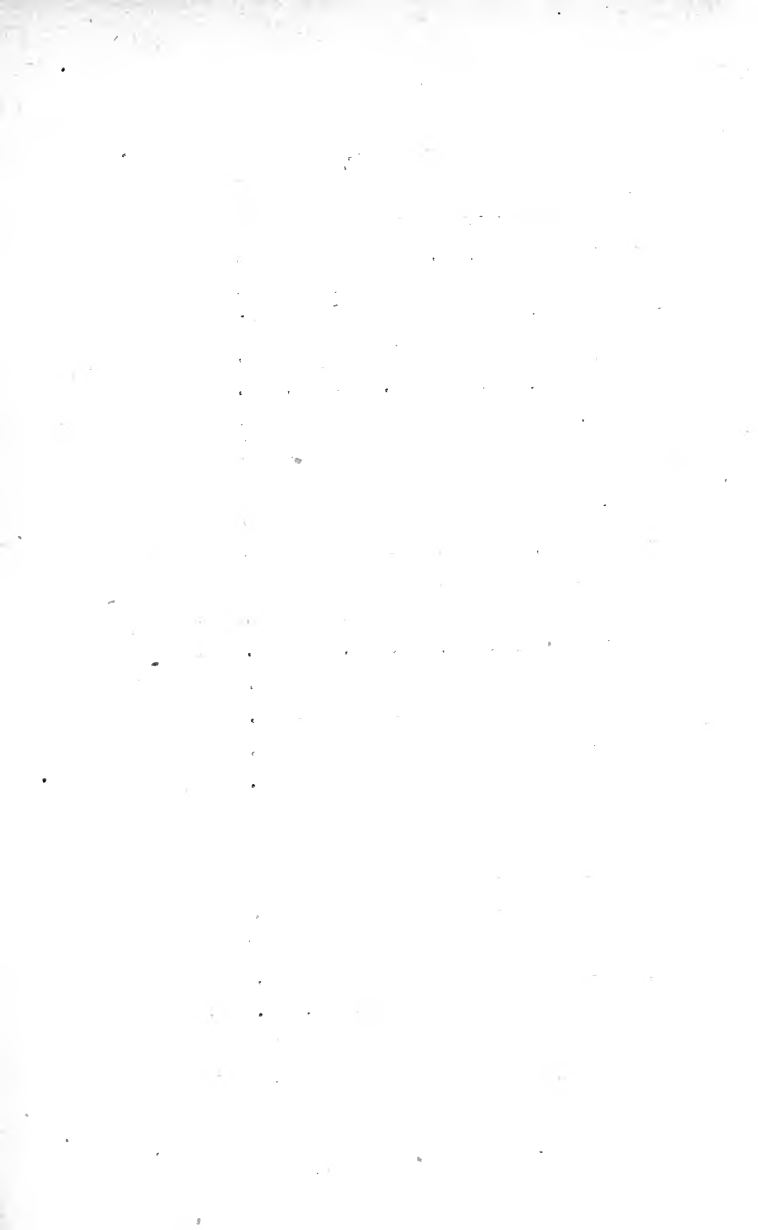
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THERE SHALL BE NO NIGHT THERE.

THE ceiling of the eternal home  
Looks down on me to-night ;  
The sunshine of the world to come  
Floods all my way with light ;  
O'er fertile fields, like rising tide,  
The wave of glory streams ;  
Through Heaven's own windows, opening wide,  
Pour down the purple beams ;—  
Oh, holy walk, when all is still,  
Yet on the evening air,  
The promise floats o'er glen and hill—  
“ There shall be no night there.”

O thou sweet vestibule of night,  
In the green woods of June,  
The melody of lingering light  
The faint heart doth attune.  
For thee I long when mid-day hour  
Brings toil to hand and brain,

The thought revives, as summer shower,  
Evening will come again.  
The well-loved path my feet shall find  
Cloistered by ancient trees,  
While Compline psalms, with prayers entwined,  
Meet the fresh sunset breeze.  
Yet, promise sent by pitying Love,  
Welcome in toil and care,  
The promise for the days above—  
“There shall be no night there.”

Was there an hour in Eden's glade  
Than other hours more blest ?  
'Twas when, though toil dared not invade,  
The unwearied sank to rest.  
Was there to Patriarch's home revealed  
An hour's supernal calm ?  
'Twas this when Isaac's favoured field  
Echoed his evening psalm.  
The bride his Heaven-loved hearth to bless  
Drew near him as he prayed,  
In all her virgin loveliness,  
Veiled, but not afraid ;

In dreams of hastening blessedness  
Jacob and Esau played.  
Was there an hour a traveller hailed  
By stranger glens and streams ?  
'Twas this, when orb of day had paled  
He slept 'mid brighter dreams ;  
When light on earthly pathway failed,  
The Golden Ladder gleams,  
The vine-clad hills of Palestine  
Still waft the Patriarch's prayer ;  
Yet can I hear the voice Divine—  
“There shall be no night there.”

Thou long day of the Infinite !  
Thou hast no pang like this,  
This mournful hour when day and night  
Meet in their parting kiss.  
O rays, ye are as splendid shrouds  
'Twixt Heaven and heart laid low ;  
O halos from these blazing clouds,  
Ye crown a toil-worn brow !  
This is the sadness, almost joy,  
Befitting souls like ours,

These tears fall cool on wild annoy  
As dew on scorched flowers—  
The thrills our vernal morn that stir ;  
The joy of noon divine,  
Eve's frankincense, without the myrrh,  
Eternal Day are thine.  
But never sense of twilight gloom,  
Nor frost on withering sod,  
Nor darkness, prelude of the tomb,  
Shall mar the Day of God.

Like weary days we sink to sleep—  
There is one night serene :  
Tis when the dews celestial steep  
Souls Heaven and earth between.  
Complete our work? Nay, left undone !  
For naught will be complete  
Till, at that solemn set of sun,  
We kiss the Bridegroom's Feet—  
Oh, welcome holy eventide,  
Mine hours of peace and prayer !  
Yet doth the holiest thought abide,  
"There shall be no night there."

My soul ! thy thoughts are far away—

Mine eyes, why hot and dim ?

Although no voice beloved may say

With thee thine evening hymn ?

He heareth thee, He blesseth thee,

He holds thy burning hand ;

No human arm caresseth thee,

Doth He not understand ?

Why restless, why cast down my soul ?

For dear to Him thou art—

The mists round setting suns unroll

Within the Sacred Heart.

Dear Lord, grant me a quiet night,

Grant me a perfect end,

Pierce through the gloom, Thou Light of Light,

Divine and Human Friend.

May darkness and the twilight cease ;

Bless Thou mine evening prayer—

Let Thou Thy child depart in peace,

For “there is no night there.”

## THE SON OF LEVI.

“Wherefore Levi hath no part nor possession with his brethren : because the Lord Himself is his possession.”

O BROTHER, look unto my lot,  
My fertile fields behold ;  
For me the valleys laugh and sing  
Round the paternal fold ;  
For me the purple vineyards veil  
The face of yon bright hill ;  
The sun shall shine, the rain down pour,  
My cup of joy to fill ;  
And harvests of the golden years  
Are in my garners stored—  
But the Son of Levi smiled and said,  
“ And I shall have the Lord.”

Think, Brother, of delightful walks  
In quiet evening hours,  
With a fair wife, whose little feet  
Fall on my path like flowers ;

And when upon her holy breast  
    I lay my tired head down,  
Shall rapture of her sinless kiss  
    Make dim the eternal crown?  
Shall Isaac's blessings steal away  
    The exceeding great reward?—  
But the Son of Levi wept and said,  
    " And I shall have the Lord."

The Son of Levi turned and gazed  
    Upon his awful choice ;  
He saw his lost world's pitying smile,  
    He heard the scorner's voice ;  
He saw his dread Inheritance  
    In many a long, dull street ;  
He faced the agony, the gloom,  
    He toiled with bleeding feet ;  
And he felt the rain drops and the tears  
    Above his lone heart meet ;  
He breathed the fetid atmosphere  
    Of many an impious den,  
Where was the image of his God  
    Defaced by sinful men ;

He saw clenched hands and broken hearts  
On many a bed of tears ;  
And he knelt in spirit silently  
Down by the pauper's biers—  
Like the wind's moan life's monotone  
Swept through the coming years.  
He passed the threshold of a cell,  
Weighed triune promise there,  
He knew no smile of winning wife  
Would chase the long day's care ;  
But he saw within the frigid choir  
His own form feebly stand ;  
And he said, as he gazed from his lonely heights,  
" Is this my promised land ? "

Years passed away—a world-worn man  
Entered a quiet cell,  
The sunlight of the dying day  
Was there to bid farewell.  
He saw his brother's peaceful face—  
Eternity begun !  
By feet that would not weary more  
The race of life was run ;  
By hands, upon his bosom crossed  
The work of life was done ;

By heart that would not hunger now

The Eternal Love was gained ;

By faithful servant called to rest

The Eternal Rest attained.

His Brother's soul was far away,

Safe with his Great Reward,

And he heard the Son of Levi say,

“ Brother, I have the Lord ! ”

## THE PRAYER OF S. COLUMBA.

When S. Columba landed at Iona in the summer of 563, he prayed for thirty years of life to devote to the conversion of the Northern Picts.

HE knelt upon the pebbly beach  
Beside the wild North seas ;  
The winds, like rush of angel wings,  
Swept round the Hebrides.

Ah, often on that lonely coast  
Roared the Atlantic storm ;  
Now sun, and warmth, and loveliness  
Kissed the saint's reverent form.

And, wafted from the Morven Hills,  
Through the primeval trees,  
The scent of heather filled the air,  
And wooed the virgin seas.

Oh, well might hill and glen rejoice ;  
To that poor land forlorn  
The Irish saint had brought the dawn  
Of God's Eternal Morn.

What was thy prayer, O Erin's Son,  
Why didst thou pray and weep,  
Was it for thy Green Isle of Saints  
That lay yon side the deep?

Was it for thy paternal home,  
The joys that kin impart,  
Or hadst thou learnt from homes of earth  
To wean thy human heart?

Was it for brethren leal and true,  
And Erin's Church most fair,  
That they again might see thy face,  
Again might own thy care?

For Erin's Church in Erin's Isle  
Hath corn, and oil, and wine,  
And beautiful, with wingèd feet,  
Her messengers divine.

*The Prayer of S. Columba.*

And Erin's shrines are rarely dight  
With jewels and with gold ;  
And treasures vast and wonderful  
Her ancient tomes enfold.

O Gartan, dear in Donegal !  
O Durrow's cloistered cell !  
O land of altar and of shrine,  
Of crozier, book, and bell !

O heavenly lore of sweet Saint Bride !  
O great Saint Patrick's hymn !—  
The memories of Heaven on earth  
Even dove-like eyes will dim.

Yet surely 'twas for other lands  
Went up thy fervent prayer ;  
And echoed thy long litanies  
On the midsummer air.

'Twas for an unknown desert land,  
Before thee mournfully spread,  
That had no pathway for thy feet,  
No pillow for thy head.

O heathen glens! he asks for ye  
The grace of God's Dear Son ;  
O silent isles ! prepare for him  
A home till life be done.

And thou didst ask heroic saint  
"A dreary gift of years"—  
Prayer for an awful heritage  
Of toil, and blood, and tears.

Twice seven centuries of rest  
For thirty years of care—  
O Irish Saint, heroic saint,  
Dost thou regret thy prayer?

## A SONG OF THE RIVIERA.

SWEET Land, O sweet Land, thou art waiting now  
For the prisoners of hope to come ;  
And unto how many who fain would live  
Wilt thou prove but a bright last home ?

The swallows go forth from the desolate north,  
From the dule of the brief sad day—  
There's many a bird to the old home nest  
That hath never come back in May.

Thou art cruel, O Land, thou dost dearly love  
From our newly sown fields to reap ;  
And the flower-strewn palls of the early dead,  
And the watch of the children's sleep.

Thou art cruel, O Land, O beautiful Land,  
Thou dost reap ere the grain is gold ;  
And how many a bride, laid side by side,  
Do thine amaranth bowers enfold !

We have sown the seed, we would reap the grain ;  
We have lent but each fragile child,  
O beautiful Land, till thy breath hath fanned,  
Till thy face hath above them smiled.

They are frail, thou sweet Land, those blue-eyed ones,  
They have fallen as they faced the hill ;  
And tho' they have gazed where the clouds unfold,  
This life hath its own glory still.

They are dear, thou sweet Land, those blue-eyed ones,  
To father, or mother, or child ;  
And for some a dearer than mother weeps  
With hope that is all undefiled.

For, beloved is the hand hand may not touch,  
And the form that eye may not see ;  
The far-away face hath a saint's own grace  
In the nimbus of memory.

They are good, thou sweet Land, those blue-eyed ones,  
As silver their souls have been tried ;  
Their first fair flowers have been nipped in the bud,  
And the promise of spring hath died.

The sun that once laughed on their vernal morn  
Hath been veiled ere the full mid-day ;  
And life hath lowered her top-gallant mast,  
Ere she sailed from youth's shining bay.

They have seen the vision of life, dear life,  
In the days of their health serene,  
And yet they are young, and the soul will mourn  
For the triumphs that might have been.

There are mists of fear 'neath thy sunny skies,  
There's a tide by thy tideless sea ;  
The ebbings and flowings of restless hope—  
O Land, set thy prisoners free !

The flax is smoking, the reed is bruised—  
O Land, be a pitying Land—  
On the weary brow, on the prostrate heart,  
Lay gently thy warm, loving hand.

Send the long rays of thy first morning sun  
Through the fane of the tamarisk trees ;  
And soft be the kiss on each thin white face  
From the lips of thy warm south breeze.

On the bright paths of thine olive-clad hills  
Scatter flowers for their fainting feet ;  
May buds of promise and blossoms of hope  
These banished ones fall down to greet.

O garner of life, or grave of our hopes,  
Brightest fringe of the classic sea,  
The fairest flowers of an old dying world  
We have lent, but lent unto thee.

O Land, O Land, O thou beautiful Land,  
Be kind to these blue-eyed ones ;  
The battle is not to the mail-clad strong,  
Nor the race unto him who runs.

Nor is life unto them who fain would live,  
Nor is work for the willing hand ;  
Give health and strength, give life and work,  
O Land, O thou beautiful Land.

## 'TIS SIXTY YEARS AGO.

“Is the weary change in me?”

FULL sixty years are dead and gone,  
Full sixty years low buried lie,  
Since I went forth from ye to live ;  
Now, wearied, I return to die.  
Ye have not changed, I cannot read  
The very shadow of a change ;  
On your full cheeks the heather blooms,  
And at your feet the rowans range ;  
And still your brow is grave with age,  
And still your face is fair with youth,  
Still to a lying world ye stand  
The image of the unchanging Truth.  
O happy flowers ! O rushing rills !  
O hills of home, my father's hills !  
  
Each savage path I still can find,  
I, who have climbed too many hills !

Each laughing brook to childhood dear,

I, who have drunk from many rills !

For, oh ! the old world paths are fair,

And still the old world waters sweet ;

For I have roamed too far, too far—

How weary are those restless feet !

And once I dreamed life's afternoon

With converse of kind friends serene ;

Ere sunset hour the best have gone

To Heaven and the kirkyard green.

Sorrow and trouble, sin and strife,

Have I not had my share ?

Amid ye I began my life,

And I would end it there :—

O never cradle half so sweet,

Nor ever burial place so fair—

O years of sorrow and of shame !

And yet, my hills, ye are the same.

Man walketh in a shadow vain,

The dear-bought splendour dies ;

Now to the eternal hills again

Would I lift up mine eyes—

O grave the furthest from the earth,  
O home the nearest to the skies ;—  
O years of glory and of fame !  
And yet, my hills, ye are the same.

Then what hath changed since ye have ne'er  
    Been chastened by decay,  
Since yours is that eternal youth  
    'Time stealeth not away ;  
Since yours is that sublime old age  
    That never groweth grey ?  
The angers of a thousand storms  
    Have wrinkled not your face ;  
The fevers of a thousand suns  
    Have banished not your grace ;  
Tempest and drought have never scathed  
    Your verdure and your rills—  
'Tis I have changed, ye are the same  
    O ancient, fadeless hills !  
To die on ye may yet be mine,  
    To live on ye, the time is past—  
Weird phantoms have this brain o'ercast—  
    My spirit hath grown dull and tame,  
And ye, my hills, ye are the same.

My cheeks are pale, no kind, strong breeze  
Can bring again their early bloom ;  
Ye may not give to me a home,  
Yet have ye left for me a tomb.  
Sweet rest amid the bells and broom  
Though dead unto their faint perfume ;  
Wild requiem of the mountain breeze  
From choir of birch and rowan trees ;  
Sweet rest beside the murmurous rills—  
The quiet weeping of the hills—  
With my dark years of grief and shame,  
For who will give the dead man blame ?  
With my bright years of joy and fame,  
For who will speak the dead man's name ?  
Oh, quickly pass the brief dull night,  
And dawn a day as Eden's morn ;  
And, like dark clouds, a life-time's ills  
Be chased from the eternal hills.

## IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN, IT WAS, IT IS.

It might have been—a prosperous life  
As Mrs Blank or Mrs Brown ;  
A fruitful mother, blooming wife,  
The pride of a commercial town.

. . . . .

It was—a moment's brief, brave pain,  
The darkness, then the light again—  
Hands flung towards yon rugged shore,  
And drownèd by the unpitying roar,  
The echo of one bitter cry  
To see thy wasted agony ;  
Then closing waters o'er thy head ;  
Then silence, for thy soul had fled,  
Until the sea gives up her dead.

It is—a cold, grey granite cross  
Erect beside a cold, grey sea ;

*It might have been, it was, it is.* 23

A rood of victory and of loss,  
A memory evermore of thee.  
Be *requiem æternam* said  
Above thee in thy virgin bed,  
Until the sea gives up her dead.

## GENIUS.

How often I have paused and gazed  
    Upon some Heaven-anointed head,  
And watched the genius flashes fly,  
    The spirit's lightning round it shed.

And thought, how great thy destiny,  
    O servant with the talents five !  
How wilt thou benefit thy race,  
    For whom, and wherefore wilt thou strive ?

Shall God or shall the Devil reap  
    The harvest of thy seeds sublime ;  
Are they for Heaven or for earth,  
    Or for eternity or time ?

Which world hath fixed these ardent eyes,  
    Into what mystic hemisphere  
Art soaring, say ? O son of light,  
    Where'er thou art, we gaze not near !

Thy life, it is a thing apart ;  
Fierce joy, keen pain, thine awful dowers :  
And if thy nights have lonelier depths,  
Thy bright days have intenser hours.

Thy ways we marvel at, or scorn,  
And deem thee of the maniac brood—  
Still, through the journey of thy years,  
Thou roamest on, misunderstood.

We judge thee but by measures mean,  
Thy fashions are uncouth and wild ;  
And yet, by some mysterious charm,  
Low at thy feet we kneel beguiled.

For what art thou ? The rain of Heaven  
Sprinkling a withered earth and sere—  
Predestined thou ere Eve let fall  
'Mid birds and flowers the primal tear.

Our path is with the common crowd,  
But thou in solitude must stand ;  
And vainly seek a kindred soul,  
Alone, who hast no native land.

Thy friends are with the crownèd dead ;  
Thy joys are in the world to come ;  
Sphered 'mid the souls unbodied, thou  
Hast there thy lovers and thy home.

O privileged and called apart !  
O favoured, and yet victim ! thou  
Alone canst tell what tears have bought  
Yon wreath upon thy pale, sad brow !

Thou Son of Light ! how great the task  
Thy God hath unto thee consigned—  
The life-work of the glowing brain,  
The toil immortal of the mind.

O bells, whose chimes must ring to Heaven,  
Or prove of final death the knell ;  
O flames, whose sparks must kindle saints,  
Or fiercer turn the fires of hell !

O mighty gifts from Heaven's rich stores,  
Whose chrism in the courts Divine  
Is ever flowing, ever fresh ;  
Yet blood and tears these gifts refine.

So shall the consecrated brain  
Weave a fine web of holy thought,  
And in its labyrinthine folds  
The visions of a world be caught.

And shall at last thy pure eyes turn  
To solve, in sacred page above,  
The mystery of thy griefs and joys—  
Why all was wisdom, all was love.

Then will thine only sigh and tear  
Be for the talents laid away ;  
Be for the cold, enshrouded hours  
Of many a dead and buried day.

Oh, that thy Lord may deign to wipe  
The blemish from the talents ten,  
And set as fixed stars in thy crown  
Each faithful gift to fellow-men.

Not unto thee, O soul, the praise !  
His Own the work, the victory won ;  
For thee enough from Lips Divine  
The words, "Thou faithful child, well done."

## THE MEMORIES OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

ONCE more I see the white sails at Dumbarton,  
Once more the galleys lie waiting for me ;  
Once more they fold me in ermine and tartan—  
Cold are the waves of the stormy North Sea.

Wild are the winds for the little queen maiden,  
Eager and strong is her mother's embrace :  
Gently, O ship, with a country's hope laden,  
Gently, but swiftly the white billows chase.

Farewell, my people, my lowlands, my highlands—  
(Oh, for these breezes as fresh as the foam !)  
Farewell, my valleys, my lochs, and green islands—  
Oh, for my garden in dear Inchmahome !

Farewell, grim lords, for not yet are ye traitors,  
Kneeling in reverence to kiss my small hand ;  
Love me a little, oh soon, to be haters,  
False to your sovereign and false to your land.

Glad was that hour when my fair France I sighted —

Babes of the Valois ! what kisses were mine !

Pleasures unmingled like stars round me lighted,

Love and devotion then gently entwine

Round the poor babe in her perilous splendour,

Round the last rose on her father's doomed tree.

Oh, thorns were few, and the young buds were  
tender,

When yon May morning rose laughing for me.

Once more "Notre Reinnette Ecossaïse," they  
call me,

Sylph-like I flash in a galliarde again ;

Once more the lights of the Louvre enthrall me,

Once more as queen and as woman I reign.

In thy green gardens, S. Germain, I gambolled,

Down thy long parterres with spring flowers  
aglow,

Deep were thy forests where oft-times I rambled—

Fleet, were thy falcons, O fair Fontainebleau !

Then wast thou by me, my bright Marie Beton,

Then wast thou by me, but where art thou now ?

Then thou didst deck me, my wise Marie Seton,

Now thou art smoothing the lines on my brow.

Soon see me stand, a new life before me,

At thy high altar, O great Notre Dame :

Why did I fear, when the ensigns hung o'er me

Bore the Red Lion and White Oriflamme ?

Brief reign of splendour, O brief blaze of beauty !

Queen of two countries, how light was my crown !

Though with my heart full of fervour and duty,

Diadems double I soon must lay down.

Swiftly but surely the shadows are stealing ;

In my *deuil* chamber a white queen \* I hide ;

Sometimes the first wounds are longest of healing—

Sad is the widow who late was a bride !

Rheims ! thou didst offer a rest to my spirit !

Wearied and worn, though only eighteen ;

Heavenly the land I there might inherit—

Oh, had I not been of this world a queen !

Farewell Tourraine ! while my wildest emotion

Mingled with prayers of Ronsard and Brantôme—

“ Oh, that bleak Scotland might sink in mid-ocean,

And the sails turning would waft the queen

home ! ”

\* Mary wore pure white mourning for forty days after the death of her husband, Henri II., and then was called “ La Reine Blanche.”

Yet, mine own country, I had been true to thee,  
Hearts are but broken by blood and by steel ;  
Thy skies were dreary, thy ways were new to me  
Yet had I reigned for thy glory and weal.

Holyrood, Holyrood, did I not love thee ?  
Gracious my welcome, and radiant my court ;  
O fair Dunedin, though storms rage above thee,  
Gladly I entered the Netherbow Port.

O mine own son from my bosom estrangèd,  
Taught for thy mother's destruction to pray ;  
How, by their wiles, thou art hardened and changèd,  
Since I last kissed thee that terrible day.

Still, with a deep and a passionate longing,  
Gaze I from Sheffield to Stirling's dear bowers ;  
Still doubts and fears in my bosom are thronging,  
Still count I hopes as I count the dark hours.

O cagèd bird, with thy fluttering wings chainèd,  
Why need'st thou vainly against thy bars beat ?  
Queen without crown ! When thy true crown is  
gained,  
Wilt thou look back on three thrones at thy feet ?

32    *The Memories of Mary Queen of Scots.*

Shut out the day, Marie Seton, I pray thee ;

Shut out the memory of day from my heart :

Why should the nearness of death's night affray me,

From this live tomb need I fear to depart ?

Art thou far distant ? Oh, welcome dear morning,

Mystical dawn of the beautiful day—

Tear off my soul the last remnant of scorning

Ere that hour greet thee, cold, terrible, grey—

Then rise and stand in thy regal adorning,

Queen over sorrow in dread Fotheringhay.

## AN AFTERNOON.

“ Why doth one day excel another, and one light another,  
and one year another year, when all come of the sun? ”

SOME days there are, 'neath sun and moon,  
So fair,—the spring-tide of the blest,  
Where eager souls expectant rest.  
For splendours of the eternal June

Hath scattered its superfluous dowers,  
And lightened, for a few brief miles,  
With gleam of Paradisal smiles  
This weary, wintry world of ours.

Else whence thine influence, whence thy balm,  
O thou all-hallowed afternoon?  
For, turning from an earthlier tune,  
We hailed thee with our Mother's Psalm?

And, down the aisle of yon wild glen,  
As from the altar of a shrine  
Whose floor and ceiling is divine,  
There echoed notes of Heaven again—

“My soul doth magnify the Lord”—  
And was not that celestial Hymn,  
Far floating o’er the purple rim,  
From hearts in perfect peace outpoured?

O Walk of Life ! thy miles are few,  
Yet long to bleeding feet like ours ;  
And thinly strewn as mountain flowers  
Are joys immaculate and true.

O Day of Life ! that wanest soon,  
Until thy latest compline psalm  
Be pourèd o’er thine hours, the balm  
From that one hallowed afternoon.

Till, where no damp of evening chills,  
Throughout the long unclouded days  
Down the dark glen of life we gaze  
From brighter, everlasting hills.

## THE VIRGIN MARTYRS.

YE crownèd maids and blessèd,  
Who triumphed in the strife ;  
Whose sorrows are redressèd  
In everlasting life ;  
Far in the ancient ages  
The brief, fierce race was run ;  
And still the Church's pages  
Tell of the victory won.

O Catherine, pure and glorious !  
Philosopher and Queen ;  
O'er wheel and sword victorious,  
In agony serene,  
The reverent angels bore thee  
To Sinai's awful steep,  
And spread thy cerements o'er thee,  
In virgin martyr's sleep.

O Agnes, undefilèd  
In thy paternal home ;  
Spotless and unbeguilèd  
By all the fires of Rome ;  
O Agnes, white and gentle  
Lamb, by the Church caressed !  
'Mid mysteries sacramental  
Thy little lambs are blest.

O wise Cecilia, winning  
Valerian to thy king,  
Even here the song beginning  
The faultless virgins sing.  
Brave Agatha, confounding  
Thy torturers in their might ;  
And Lucy still surrounding  
Fair Syracuse with light.

But vain were the endeavour  
To tell the martyr maids,  
Roses and lilies ever  
In Paradisal glades ;  
The crownèd maids and blessèd,  
Who triumphed in the strife,  
Whose sorrows are redressèd  
In Everlasting Life.

Each life with victory laden  
How beautiful thou art !  
Look on it, Christian maiden,  
And write in on thy heart ;  
On thy life's bloodless sorrow  
The Virgin Queens look down.  
Think on thine own to-morrow,  
And gird thee for thy crown.

## THE PRAYER BY THE WELL OF NAHOR.

“O Lord, the God of my master Abraham, meet me to-day, I beseech Thee, and show kindness to my master Abraham. Behold, I stand nigh the spring of water, and the daughters of the inhabitants of this city will come out to draw water. Now, therefore, the maid to whom I shall say : Let down thy pitcher that I may drink, and she shall answer, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also, let it be the same whom Thou hast provided for Thy servant Isaac, and by this I shall understand, that Thou hast shown kindness to my master. He had not yet ended these words within himself, and behold Rebecca came.”

FEARFUL, with his great commission,  
He had pass'd o'er hill and dale ;  
Would he mar it by omission,  
Would aught hinder, would he fail ?  
By the ancient city's portal  
Rose to Heaven his fervent prayer—  
Rarely hath the voice of mortal  
Found so quick an entrance there.

One by one stars Oriental  
Rose, and flashed like lamps divine,  
Around mysteries sacramental  
In the silent central shrine ;  
But the servant's eyes were gazing  
Where celestial planets gleam,  
To the golden stairway blazing  
That would gladden Jacob's Dream.

Standing by the well of water,  
With the camels kneeling by,  
Prayed he that one earthly daughter  
From yon city might draw nigh—  
"Abraham's God and Lord Eternal,  
Full of mercy, full of might,  
Grant to me this gift supernal,  
In an answered prayer to-night."

And his lips were still entreating,  
When he heard light footsteps pass,  
Footsteps that like flowers were meeting  
Other flowerets on the grass ;  
And unto the well of water,  
In the night's first virgin hour,  
Downward drew a dark-eyed daughter,  
With her beauty for her dower.

40     *The Prayer by the Well of Nahor.*

Oh, his thrill of joy exceeding !

For he knew his prayer was heard,  
And his voice from lowly pleading  
Soon should magnify the Lord ;  
And he clasped the glittering jewel  
On the unreluctant hand,  
And the daughter of Bethuel  
Bade him welcome to the land.

Prayer of faith, so humbly proffered  
Thou didst pierce the Orient skies ;  
And on mystic censers offered  
With the prayers of saints arise  
To the rainbow-veiled pavilions  
Where the seraphim hold state ;  
When the mother of the millions  
Passed that hour thro' Nahor's gate.

Still, beside the well of water,  
Fervent prayers arise to Thee ;  
Not to every son and daughter  
Speeds such answer swift and free ;  
Yet sometimes decrees are movèd  
Ere our lips have ceased to pray,  
And the beautiful belovèd  
Comes to meet us by the way.

*The Prayer by the Well of Nahor.* 41

But, when thou wouldst purify us  
By our prayers unheard that seem ;  
And in veiled love deny us  
Even a drop from Nahor's stream ;  
Standing by these earthly waters  
That we never here may drink,  
Grant to us, Thy sons and daughters,  
More than we can ask or think.

## THE NUNS OF IONA.

“The burden of the desert of the sea.”

THE wind sweeps over the Northern seas,  
And mourneth around the Hebrides ;  
’Tis chilly and wild in Iona.

’Tis five o’clock in the afternoon,  
Less dark is the midnight hour of June ;  
And the night falls down on Iona.

And the nuns stand in the chapel dim,  
Solemnly echoes the Vesper Hymn ;  
There is Heaven on earth at Iona.

For the sweet words of our Mother’s Psalm  
Pour down on the restless seas their balm ;  
And still are the waves of Iona.

Oh, that little home is white and fair ;  
The salt of the earth is sprinkled there  
On the holy Isle of Iona.

'Tis two o'clock on the wintry seas ;  
Dark is the night of the Hebrides,  
But 'tis full mid-day at Iona ;

For the nuns stand in the ancient choir,  
And with holy hearts and lips aspire  
To the Heaven above Iona.

Now silence reigns on the awful deep,  
While He giveth His beloved sleep—  
The sleep of the blest in Iona.

And the star-like lamp doth keep alone  
The sentinel watch, by the Altar Throne  
Of the King of kings in Iona.

Three hundred years lie low in their graves ;  
The same wild winds and the same cold waves  
Are still sighing around Iona.

But the loved Isle is a desert wild ;  
The feet of the sinful have defiled  
The home of the nuns of Iona.

The pilgrim cometh to fast and weep,  
While He giveth His beloved sleep—  
They shall wake, but not in Iona.

To rest, three centuries, has been laid  
In her storm-swept tomb each holy maid ;  
And the turf is green at Iona.

And the wild winds of the wintry seas  
Are echoing around the Hebrides,  
But not the sweet hymns of Iona.

For above our sorrows and our sighs,  
From the cloistered homes of Paradise  
I have heard the nuns of Iona.

## NEW YEAR'S MORNING.

O COLD New Year, O strange New Year,  
O unfamiliar friend,  
So young, and yet so sad, thy face  
That over me doth bend.

The dear old year, the kind old year,  
The wise old year is dead ;  
Away to past eternities  
His loving soul hath fled.

I held him in a fast embrace,  
I said, "Go not away,  
O gentle, well-beloved friend ;  
A little longer stay.

"Thou wast to me so true a friend,  
Can any strange New Year  
Be all that thou hast been to me,  
As faithful and as dear ?

“To-night some power hath softly shed  
A glamour o'er the past ;  
The chimes of an all-radiant June  
Ring 'neath the wintry blast.

“And gazing backward, I behold  
A labyrinthine maze  
Of golden months, and shining weeks,  
And long delightful days.

“Though there may be more glorious years,  
Yet never more shall be  
A year so kind, a year so sweet,  
As thou hast proved to me.

“And there may be more holy years,—  
But oh, mine eyes are dim !  
For few mar not with earth's rude notes  
Their morning hour's sweet hymn.

“And now to-night, thy dying night,  
A dreary time is this—  
O friend, what fond remembrances  
Meet in our parting kiss !

“O friend, my friend, I hold thee tight,  
I cannot let thee die”—

But the Old Year lifted his pillowed head,  
And said, “Dear friend, good-bye.”

He chid me, but not wrathfully ;  
He said, “O foolish soul,  
So tender and so weak art thou,  
How shalt thou reach the goal ?

“Who linger in Time’s dying arms,  
Who love Time’s vain embrace,  
How can they meet unscathed and pure  
Eternity’s calm face ?

“Keep thou thy rapture and thy love  
For the Everlasting Years,  
And give me all that I deserve—  
Thy pity and thy tears.

“Nor deem that in the unborn years  
Youth’s guileless tune must fail—  
Thy parting words, thy holiest words,  
O fearful friend and frail !

“Good-bye, my friend, my loving friend,  
To whom I proved so sweet,  
Yet *once* in that eternity  
We two again shall meet.

“And one by one apart shall stand,  
My months, and weeks, and days :—  
God grant the Sun of Justice then  
May flood them with His Rays !

“Blessings and graces, all good gifts  
On thee, dear friend, be poured—  
Thee I commit with prayer and hope  
Unto the New Year's Lord.”

So spake he ; and I listened till  
The echo died away :—  
The clock struck twelve,—his passing bell  
Awoke the New Year's Day.

“O cold New Year, O white New Year  
All hail, my new-born friend ;  
Stay with me and be kind to me,  
And bless me till the end.

“With thee what glad or bitter days  
May or may not be stored ;  
I know not, fear not, but I know  
I trust the New Year's Lord.”

## ON PICTURES OF THE ANNUNCIATION.

A CHAMBER fair and lowly,  
Still as a central shrine ;  
A virgin pure and holy,  
A messenger Divine.

Full many a hand immortal  
Hath striven to paint this hour ;  
To ope the awful portal,  
To deck that Nazareth bower.

Her long blue robe is flowing,  
Her brow with meekness crowned ;  
Her aureole is throwing  
Its radiancy around.

Her sacred form is clasped  
By maiden's band of gold ;  
And in her hand is graspèd  
A volume quaint and old.

A lily flower beside her  
Her sentinel appears,  
And shadowy curtains hide her  
From wondering hemispheres.

A hallowed breeze seems stealing  
Like a sweet melody  
To where the Virgin, kneeling,  
Asketh, "How can this be?"

The Son of Light supernal  
Pauseth her voice to hear ;  
The very Dove Eternal  
Doth to His Bride draw near.

O great Annunciation !  
Even heart and hand must fail  
From Jesus' Incarnation  
To lift the reverent veil ;

Yet, as we have a Mother,  
We love to paint that hour  
When God became our Brother  
In Mary's mystic Bower.

52    *On the Pictures of the Annunciation.*

And as these hearts are human,  
True faith will hear and see  
That young and gentle woman  
Saying, "So let it be."

O pure and spotless Maiden !  
O Mother of our God !  
O thou with glory-laden !  
O Jesse's Blossoming Rod !

This earth by sin deceivèd  
All it once lost hath won  
When the true Eve conceivèd  
The Everlasting One.

Since by the voice of angel  
We knew Thine advent, Lord,  
And all Thy sweet evangel  
Was in that message stored,

By Thy Dear Incarnation  
Wedding the world to Thee,  
And by Thy Pure Oblation,  
May our up-rising be !

## THE FIRST "GLORIA IN EXCELSIS."

"Gloria in Excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis."

ONCE *Gloria in Excelsis* broke  
O'er fertile fields at even,  
And shepherds from their dreams awoke  
To hear the choirs of heaven.  
Thro' rifted skies all suddenly  
Flashed wings and harps divine,  
And echoed songs celestially  
O'er listening Palestine.  
The anthem of the angels rolled  
Down transept of the sky,  
O'er Judah's immemorial fold  
By Dan and Nepthali;  
O'er Joseph's bright, benignant fields,  
By Benjamin's sweet rest,  
Where Simeon's land her fair fruit yields,  
And Asher's days are blest :

Past Gad, who hath the lion's heart,  
    And Reuben's boundless years ;  
By Levi's lonelier severed part,  
    And consecrated spheres ;  
O'er Issachar and Zabulon  
    Sped on the wondrous strain ;—  
The world, lit by the Rising Sun,  
    Gave back the long refrain.  
That music moved like angel's wing  
    By flower-fringed Galilee,  
And softer than Æolian string  
    It stirred the drear Dead Sea.  
Onward, and onward ever on,  
    Past city of the palms ;  
Breathing o'er snow-clad Lebanon,  
    Wakening the desert's calms.  
Across the Jordan's frontier wave  
    The mighty *Gloria* swept,  
To where, in his mysterious grave  
    The Lord's dear servant slept ;  
Nor paused it at the threshold blest  
    Of ancient Palestine,  
The loneliest islands of the West  
    Heard these sweet notes divine.

The lights that flashed on Judah's skies  
    Made Hellas's light grow dim ;  
The melody of Paradise  
    Disturbed Apollo's hymn ;  
A holier charm than Orpheus lent  
    To sea, and hill, and dale,  
Rang from the orient firmament,  
    And Egypt's suns grew pale—  
For to the final day of time,  
    And through eternity  
Earth's mirth and wail, and Heaven's own chime  
    Shall feel that melody.  
Once opened, the eternal door  
    Shall never close again ;  
The promise sounds for evermore  
    Of peace to peaceful men.  
And when the utmost psalms of praise  
    Round our High Altars swell,  
When censers fling their reverent haze  
    Before the Invisible.  
What undernotes can true hearts hear  
    Mellowing their mortal hymn,  
The echo faint, tho' deep and clear  
    Of Thrones and Seraphim ;

56      *The First "Gloria in Excelsis."*

The Lullaby of Bethlehem

Sung by the Sons of Light,

The Chant of New Jerusalem,

Laud of the Infinite.

Lift up our hands, lift up our hearts,

Let the full anthem flow—

The angels taught these awful parts

Two thousand years ago.

## SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

THE first pale purple shadow floats  
Across the Church's sky ;  
Preludes of penitential notes  
Scarce touch her melody.

The lamps that o'er the Holy night  
Hung like a diadem  
Are burning low, and faith's pure light  
Glides to Jerusalem.

Oh, sweet it was with orient kings  
To hail the awful Child ;  
And Candlemas her radiance flings  
Around the Undefined.

His Birth was bright, His feasts are fair,  
And flesh and blood will shrink  
His cross to lift, His crown to wear,  
His bitter cup to drink.

But glorias and triumphant songs  
Are meet for Seraphim ;  
To us, who sin, by right belongs  
A penitential hymn.

Angels might envy penance sweet,  
The unwounded ask our balm ;  
For rest might throb the unwearied feet  
In Heaven's eternal calm !

For, mystery of grace divine,  
With natures lifted high,  
In silence of the darkening shrine,  
We yearn for Calvary.

Down vista of the seventy days  
What meets our vision now ?  
The upper room, the palm-strewn ways,  
And the dear thorn-crowned Brow.

And, if our faltering spirit fails,  
What far-off triumph rings ?  
It is a ransomed world that hails  
A risen King of Kings.

O Race of Life ! clouds come between  
Us and the longed-for goal ;  
O Lent of Life ! our eyes have seen  
The Easter of the Soul.

## ASH WEDNESDAY IN THE SOUTH.

“ Memento, homo, quia pulvis es, et in pulverem reverteris.”

IN golden cradle of the southern morning  
Wake thy first moments, O thou southern sun !  
As lovely in the dewy veil's adorning  
As in eve's gorgeous robes when life is done.

On Santa Croce falls thy primal greeting,  
On Santa Anna lights thy gorgeous blaze ;  
With grey San Marco is a genial meeting,  
For San Filippo is a radiant gaze.

And sacred dome and ancient campanile  
The youthful sun hath touched with loving hand ;  
And like a welcome guest all kindly, freely,  
Hath smiled, and wooed, and won the laughing  
land.

Where vine-clad hills o'er happy glens are bending,  
Where homesteads nestle 'neath the olive trees,  
Through rosy beds the hour's bright feet are  
wending,  
There thrills the anthem of the matin breeze.

Is this a time for penitential weeping,  
When all the world is radiant with delight?  
Is this a time for lonely vigil keeping,  
When moonlight floods the dim voluptuous  
night?

New wedded birds in citron groves are singing,  
And earth's full censer charms the vernal air;  
Yet all around the solemn bells are ringing,  
Calling to fast, to penance, and to prayer.

Is this a day from Eden left to cheer us,  
A golden ladder on the wanderer's way?  
Or hath an hour from Paradise come near us,  
Or is it but a dark Ash Wednesday?

Not from without, O soul, shall any tell thee,  
Not from without, but surely from within;  
For oh, rememberest thou what once befell thee,  
When in a Garden thou wast scathed with sin?

Still at that Garden Gate the sentinel standeth  
    To shield its cloisters with the flaming grille,  
And even now each fallen son demandeth  
    Once more in his old home to take his fill.

For fairer far than his poor false Utopia,  
    That wondrous region whence the rivers rolled  
Adown Assyria, around Ethiopia,  
    Where Havilah spread wide her fields of gold.

Yet in that land the world's first joys were scattered,  
    Her virgin beauty hastened to decay :  
And man, in soul, and mind, and body shattered,  
    In Eden passed a penitential day.

Not from without, O soul, shall grief assail thee,  
    Not from the vernal morn or moon-loved night ;  
But, deep within, thou wearily may'st bewail thee,  
    And thro' the glory cry, " More light, more  
    light ! "

For even to faith hath life her veiled pages,  
    And to love's tranquil home would doubt steal  
    in ;  
And not the light of these two thousand ages  
    Hath solved the mystery of grief and sin.

O hearts that shrink from pain, and tire of sweetness !

O days of earth too dreary or too bright !

O mystery of a mournful incompleteness !

While still the cry goes up, " More light, more  
light ! "

Man lives but for the Resurrection Morning,

The days and nights of time glide swiftly by ;

Even now behold th' Eternal Day adorning

The coming sunrise in time's storm-swept sky.

Thou art a foretaste of our Resurrection

(O southern morning, light us on our way ! )

When shriven souls shall need no more correction !

And Heaven's year have no penitential day.

On Santa Croce shed, O sun, thy greeting,

On Santa Anna light with gorgeous blaze,

With grey San Marco hold thy genial meeting

And San Filippo bless with radiant gaze.

Stream on historic fane and home paternal,

A path of glory tract on hill and glen ;

But may that pathway lead to Home Eternal,

And to the Easter of the souls of men !

Even to that Eden whose celestial graces

These risen lives shall freely welcome in,

Even when our feet are resting from their races,

And when our souls have ceased from their sin.

Where is no night, there shall be no more weeping ;

Where is no winter, there is no decay ;

When sheaves are garnered, there is no more  
reaping ;

Where is no sin, no penitential day.

ANGELS CAME AND MINISTERED TO  
HIM.

TELL us of these ministrations,  
Tell us, O ye Seraphim—  
When ye saw the Light of Heaven  
With his eyes all sad and dim,—  
Did ye soothe Him with the music  
Of His Virgin Mother's Hymn?

Did ye bring him milk and honey,  
Or a purple burden bear  
Of far riper grapes than Eshcol's  
From the green tree bending There,  
Or white wreaths of fadeless blossoms  
Fannèd by a spirit's prayer.

Or, perchance, in nook of Eden,  
Sheltered from sin's thunder shower,  
Did ye find Him fruits and garlands  
In some unapproachèd bower?

66 *Angels came and ministered to Him.*

By the sentinel of Eden  
Kept for this mysterious hour.

O ye awful ministrations,  
Hidden from our sin-veiled sight—  
Ye beheld your God an hungered  
O ye favoured Sons of Light,  
When ye spread the mystic banquet  
To refresh the Infinite.

To the still and silent desert,  
Forty days and nights to be,  
Doth He call thee, faithful servant,  
When thy shriven soul is free.  
On the Resurrection Morning  
He will minister to thee.

And when thou at last hast reachèd  
Even the Holy Mountain's rim,  
When the Lent of Life is over,  
And time's desert years grow dim,  
In some mansion of His city  
Mayst thou minister to Him !

## THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.

O LORD, my God, dear is that earthly Garden,  
That Garden where Thy veiled light once shone ;  
Dearer than Tabor's unconcealèd glory,  
Than cedar avenues of Lebanon ;  
Brighter than banks of blossoming oleander  
Fringing the sacred waves of Galilee,  
Are the long walks, the groves, the flowers, the  
olives  
Of the dear Garden of Gethsemane.  
O holy Brows, not yet for ye were twinèd  
The piercing thorns of the royal Crown ;  
O Sacred Heart, thou wast as yet unbroken,  
Though o'er thee now the crimson drops fall  
down ;  
O patient Feet, 'twas in an earthly Garden,  
As yet unfettered, ye did wander free ;  
O healing Hands, ye were as yet unwounded  
When, in the moonlight of Gethsemane,

Together clasped ye were a pale, worn witness  
To perfect weakness and humanity.  
The day was dying, and with reverent splendour  
Entered the evening of that Eastern land,  
And Thou didst walk alone, O world's Redeemer,  
Alone, for here not even the blessed band,  
Nor yet the Virgin Mother in her anguish,  
Might pass within the consecrated shade.  
Alone within the garden Thou didst suffer,  
And all alone in resignation prayed  
In accents trembling, for the bitter chalice  
Was terrible to Flesh and Blood like Thine,  
As perfect and as absolutely Human  
As Thy Divinity was all Divine.  
Enkindled by the slanting rays of moonlight  
The night dews flash upon the emerald sod  
And favoured flowerets fill their little censers  
Where kneels in agony the Son of God.  
Transparent clouds glide by on silent pinions,  
Long lies the reflex of the olive trees ;  
*Tenebrae, misereres* of the angels  
Come wafted slowly on the pitying breeze.  
Twas in a Garden, in an earthly Garden,  
The rich man laid Thee in the new-made tomb,

Even as the Spirit, shadowing her who bore Thee,  
Laid Thee Incarnate in the Virgin womb.  
There shone the Paschal moon serene above Thee,  
There the First Easter Morn was ushered in  
With Alleluias of Thy fair Creation,  
Hailing Thy triumph over death and sin :  
There, as we read in legends of the angels,  
Met Thee Thy Mother, radiant, undefiled—  
Never the thrill of her Annunciation  
Equalled the meeting with her risen Child.  
There through the breezy aisles at early morning  
Ran the bright penitent with eager feet,  
“ Mary ! ” Thy Voice to her thy revelation,  
Thou didst absolve her, and didst bless and greet.  
Oh, at the gateway of no earthly garden,  
But on the threshold of our endless home,  
Call us by name, absolve us, consecrate us,  
Say to Thy penitents, “ Ye blessed, come.”  
Only with Thee shall we rejoice forever  
Beneath the branches of the Mystic Tree ;—  
Dearer with Thee the pastures of the blessed  
Than the dear Garden of Gethsemane.

## THURSDAY IN HOLY WEEK.

“Adoremus in æternum Sanctissimum Sacramentum.”

THERE is a day of splendour  
And pure supernal bliss,  
When Heaven and earth are meeting  
In Eucharistic kiss ;  
Mid Holy Week's dark cinctures  
'Twas hung a diadem,  
When in the Upper Chamber  
Of royal Jerusalem

The Holy Hands were lifted,  
The Holy Heart within  
Beat fast with love, as knowing  
What souls the Gift would win ;  
For each dear soul's salvation  
How yearned the Sacred Heart  
And, thirsting for His creatures,  
God did Himself impart.

Knew'st Thou, O Dear Redeemer,  
Full may a ransomed soul  
Fed by the Food of angels  
In triumph reach the goal ;  
Saw'st Thou each holy altar  
Spread for the Feast Divine,  
Saw'st thou the good Communion  
Of each true child of Thine ?

And Thou didst know, O Saviour,  
Of pride and self the strife,  
When at Thine awful altar  
Men spurn the Bread of Life ?  
When scornful human nature  
Will ask, " How can this be ?  
Are these thy gods, O Israel ?  
It is no mystery ! "

" He meaneth but a symbol,"  
Dreaming that haply Thou  
Art only in the spirit,  
Or heaven uplifted brow ;  
A visionary Presence,  
Poor phantom of the True,

With shadowy rites befitting  
The temple of the Jew.

We ask not how Thou comest,  
We know that here Thou art  
And dost, though senses fail us,  
Thy Flesh and Blood impart ;  
Thyself in very manhood  
The spotless Virgin's Son ;  
Thyself our God Eternal,  
Divine and Human One.

Then hail to thee, blest Thursday !  
Rift in the Passion sky !  
Our Gloria in Excelsis rings  
Though Calvary is nigh !  
And sing, my tongue, the mystery  
Of this great Feast Divine ;  
While throngèd by the faithful  
Be every flower-girt shrine.

O joy beyond all gladness !  
O grace surpassing grace !  
O foretaste of the Vision  
That waits us in Thy Face !

O Food for pilgrim spirits,  
Bright Link with Heaven and Home!  
O Bond betwixt all brothers  
Wherever they may roam!

To-day, o'er Earth's dark waters,  
Flew in the peaceful Dove,  
And the Church, young and fearful,  
First knew that God is Love.  
To greet this Holy Thursday,  
The bells in triumph ring;  
The star-like lamp burns brightly,  
The sentinel of the King;

Mingle soft clouds of incense  
With fragrance of white flowers,  
Of Heaven and Earth the bridal  
These Eucharistic hours;  
Bring from the cloistered garden  
The lily and the rose;  
May faith and love encompass  
The altar of Repose.

For, O ye hearts and spirits,  
Do ye true censers prove

To waft to Heaven the incense  
Of pure enkindled love ;  
Ye lamps of faith burn brightly  
In each wise virgin's hand,  
And be the Holy Thursday  
A Sabbath in the land.

A FULL MOON ON THE NIGHT OF  
GOOD FRIDAY.

PAUSE, pause on thy march of splendour,  
Thy path is the Passion sky—  
Not yet would our souls surrender  
The thought of His agony.

Even now on the awful mountain  
Lie scattered the holy stains ;  
Scarce staunched is the living fountain  
That flowed from His Sacred veins.

And the High Priests quake and wonder  
When the long drawn Vail is rent,  
When the black clouds crash asunder  
O'er the trembling firmament ;

When the mists of wrath are shrouding  
The doomed Jerusalem,  
And the coming storm be-clouding  
The world's lost diadem ;

76 *A Full Moon on the Night of Good Friday.*

And the dead men of Judea  
In her fearful streets are seen,  
And the saint of Arimathea  
Hath buried the Nazarene.

Even now are the sad waves wailing  
O'er the face of Galilee ;  
And the orient stars are failing  
The glades of Gethsemane.

And the Mother Maid of Sorrow  
Hath gone to her strange new home,  
To wait for the great To-morrow,  
When He leaves the virgin tomb.

Even now from the strippèd altar  
Hath fled the Pre-Sanctified ;  
And with hearts that faint and falter  
We fain by His side had died.

Then pause on thy march of splendour,  
Thy path is the Passion sky—  
Not yet would our souls surrender  
The thought of His agony.

*A Full Moon on the Night of Good Friday. 77*

Wait, wait till the night imperial  
That heralds the rising Sun,  
Then speed on thy path ethereal  
Ere the Triumph of triumph's won.

Pause too on thy path, O mortal,  
'Neath the shadow of the Rood—  
Close slowly the sacred portal  
Of the one day callèd Good.

## HOLY SATURDAY.

O DAY of Rest, we greet thee,  
Though not with triumph psalm,  
Nor march in bright procession,  
Waving the victor's palm ;  
We know no Alleluias  
Befitting peace like this—  
To-day the prisoned spirits  
Salute us with their kiss.

O Day of rest and waiting,  
Day of the tranquil Tomb,  
Thou as a frontier standest  
'Twixt awful joy and gloom ;  
Behind, long weeks of penance  
And sharp confession's sting  
Before, our Paschal altars  
Are decking for their King.

But yesternight Thy servants  
Were weeping on their knees ;  
Tenebræ, misereres  
Swept by like wintry breeze ;  
And when thy Spouse down draweth  
Her white veil o'er the Rood,  
We saw Thy Dear Hands giving  
Thyself to be our Food.

With joy and grief we faltered,  
Our wondering eyes were dim,  
What time the apostles chanted  
Their Eucharistic Hymn.  
We knew thy path o'er Cedron  
To lone Gethsemane,  
And then beneath the olives  
Did we not watch with Thee ?

The squalors and the anguish  
Of Thy dread Hour we saw ;  
And the bright lights extinguished  
As one by one withdraw  
Far from Thine awful death-bed,  
Where love and torture blend,—  
Thine Own, as fearful, trembling  
To face with Thee the end.

And now it is all over,  
And Death, with strange new grace,  
Knowing her might is vanquished,  
Would beautify Thy face.  
At rest Thy worn-out Body,  
Thy wearied soul at rest,  
Or, lighting up the cloisters,  
Where wait for Thee the blest.

O Day of Rest and waiting,  
Day of the Holy Dead,  
On thee, as on a pillow,  
The Church lays down her head ;  
For thee her holiest homage,  
The silence of her bells,  
The requiems for her children,  
Blessing their brief farewells,  
Her peace, since One hath ended  
A life of toil and tears ;  
Her joy, since One hath lived  
The Three and Thirty years.

## EASTER DAY.

THOU art risen, Thou art risen,  
Sun of Justice, Heaven's own Sun !  
Thou hast burst the dreary prison,  
And Redemption's work is done.  
Yet awhile and we bewailed Thee  
In the consecrated glade,  
When Thy Human fears assailed Thee,  
And Thy Human prayers were prayed.  
Day of Peace ! the faint heart falters,  
But, if peace be here below,  
'Tis when by these Easter altars  
Easter Alleluias flow.

Death, was thine own knell not tollèd,  
Grave, was vanquished thy fear,  
When the Stone away was rollèd,  
When they said " He is not here " ?

When the faithful women, wondering,  
Knew a world from Death was freed,  
And through Heaven's own courts went thunder-  
ing,  
"He is risen, is risen indeed" ?

Oh, how many a heart was yearning  
Thy Dear Face again to see !  
Oh, how many feet were turning  
On the road to Galilee !  
These are scenes too fair for mortal,  
But perchance the Cherubim,  
Bending from the Great White Portal,  
Seeing, told it in their Hymn—  
Whispered to the reverent angels  
Who did first meet Thine "All Hail,"  
Even Thine Own inspired Evangels  
Have no words to tell the tale.

Easter, in thy triumph glorious,  
Faith is vanishing in sight,  
And in anthems all victorious  
Heard we not the Sons of Light ?  
Day of beauty and of splendour,  
Day of Paradisal calm,

Day of benediction tender,  
    Pouring o'er the year thy balm.  
Day whose holiness and sweetness  
    Are as gales from Eden's bowers,  
Owning but thine incompleteness  
    To these wayward wills of ours.  
Holiest resolutions bless us,  
    Kneeling on the altar stair ;  
And the wings of angels press us,  
    And Thou hear'st the low-breathed prayer.  
We implore Thee, we adore Thee,  
    In the silence of Thy shrine ;  
We adore Thee, we implore Thee,  
    By that Risen Life of Thine.

Never yet did salutation  
    Break in melody so sweet,  
When, her pardon's consummation,  
    Thou Thy penitent did greet,  
On that primal Paschal morning,  
    When the world, like shriven child,  
Glittering in her fair adorning,  
    On the Risen Saviour smiled.  
And each soul by name thou namest  
    On the dawn of Easter Day,

And each dear bought soul Thou claimest  
Ere the shadows flee away.  
Without Easter Day to meet us,  
Dreary were the Lent of Life !  
Without Jesus Christ to greet us,  
Who were equal for the strife ?

Whence thy sweetness all celestial  
O thou Feast of feasts divine ?  
Other feasts blend drops terrestrial  
With the Heavenly Banquet's wine.  
Thou art like an altar blazing  
Downward from the Church above,  
While our dim eyes fail with gazing  
Upward to the Fount of Love.

Foretaste of our Resurrection,  
When in loveliness undreamed  
Yet with mutual recollection  
Shall awaken the redeemed—  
Oh, that wonderful re-union  
In the gardens of the blest ;  
Oh, that mystical communion,  
Oh, that Easter of our rest !

Jesu, by Thy Life once offered  
For us on the Holy Rood,  
Jesu, by Thy grace now proffered  
In Thy Body and Thy Blood,  
Look not on our soul's pollution  
When we rise up from the grave,  
Grant us then Thine absolution :  
Thou hast risen, Thou canst save.  
We implore Thee, we adore Thee,  
In the Holiest of Thy shrine ;  
We adore Thee, we implore Thee,  
By that Risen Life of Thine.

## THE BEAUTY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

“ Domine dilexi decorem domûs tuæ, et locum habitationis  
gloriæ tuæ.”

THY strength we know, O glorious Bride Divine,  
When in the strife we fail—  
Now, Mother, in the inmost flower-girt shrine  
Thy features fair unveil.

For thou, O Bride, art beautiful within ;  
Thy clothing is wrought gold,  
And by thy loveliness hast power to win  
The wanderer to thy Fold.

Art thou not by our lives from day to day ?  
Thy welcome step is near ;  
Thine is the matin gleam, the sunset ray,  
For cradle and for bier.

Thou hast thy *Salve* for the babe's first breath,  
The dear dead face is thine ;  
Thy *Vale* wafts thy sons o'er waves of death  
Safe to the beach Divine.

All unforgotten, Mother of the Soul,  
The realms of dawn they throng ;  
Oh, happy they who win the shadowy goal  
Soothed by thy requiem song.

The bride is thine, she leaves the old home hearth  
Thy blessing on her brow ;  
He who at Cana's Feast crowned sinless mirth,  
Hath sealed her promise now.

Thy ray of beauty can our dark hours gild,  
And, Mother wise and good,  
The cup of pleasure which our hands have filled  
Thou signest with the Rood.

Beggars to thee are dear as queens and kings,  
For all have royal souls ;  
The toil-worn hand may touch thy holiest things,  
Dull brows win aureoles !

88     *The Beauty of the Catholic Church.*

Rather let empires crash than one soul fail  
    Whose destiny is bliss ;  
Sooner let myriad suns and stars grow pale  
    Than heaven one spirit miss.

By thy dear altars is intense repose,  
    There is Emmanuel ;  
When in the desert the Shekinah glows  
    O'er tents of Israel,

And earth to Heaven is knit by blessed bands,  
    And weary souls have rest,  
What time thou layest by anointed hands  
    Our Saviour in our breast.

Thine absolution is supreme release !  
    Our shriven souls rejoice,  
And all the winds of Heaven are echoing peace  
    With one harmonious voice.

And oh, what joy doth bless the day's last hour  
    At Benediction sweet,  
When down the faithful fall like evening shower  
    Before the Mercy Seat.

Holy of Holies, thou art all our own,  
Here Aaron never trod ;—  
With foretastes of adorings near the Throne,  
We worship Thee, our God !

Ark of Salvation ! Wild the waves of sin,  
The winds of life rise high—  
Oh take, oh take the storm-tossed traveller in,  
In thee to live and die.

## CONFESSION.

O AWFUL hour ! The angels know thee not,  
The unfallen who have nothing to regret,  
Who never sinned in word, or deed, or thought,  
And whose calm brows no mournful memories  
fret,  
Who hover o'er the citadel of sin,  
But at its portal never entered in.

O blessed hour ! The low voice murmuring all,  
The breast and brow safe sealed by the Rood,  
Each uttered sin a link in Satan's thrall  
Just broken, and as one by one the brood  
Of evil spirits flee, the weeping child  
Grows even in contrition undefiled.

Let shriven souls delineate thy bliss,  
Thou peerless moment, when the uplifted hand  
Absolves us, and Heaven's own celestial kiss  
Hath breathed o'er the features of the land ;  
And the bright soul, as new-baptised and born,  
Drinks deep this foretaste of its Easter Morn.

Ah ! then doth pour around a sweeter br  eze  
Than ever stirred erewhile old Eden's glade ;  
The Lord God walks amid the garden trees ;  
We hear Him, and we answer not afraid.  
So radiant grown, we scarce can recognise  
Our souls, already dressed for Paradise.

A flood of light encompasseth around,  
No earthly glory steeps the altar stair ;  
Unfettered footsteps glance on holy ground  
Like pinions of pure spirits in mid-air ;  
O'er the blest brow and heaven absolved soul  
Seems kindling even now an aureole.

Peace, peace upon the ocean of the soul ;  
Peace, peace is all without us and within ;  
Across the charmed waters may not roll  
The memory of the memory of a sin  
In this first moment when indeed we feel  
Thy Spirit's unction and thy Pardon's seal.

Now would we die, if we might choose or will,  
Would die so we might never sin again ;  
Wherefore, when we have touched fair Sion's hill,  
Need we turn backward to the dull campaign ?  
Aye, it must be, for even at the church door  
The doom  d legions count their chances o'er.

Yet may we linger 'neath Thy Cross awhile :

Even praise a desecration now appears,  
One word might chase the enchantment of Thy  
smile,

We dare not break the spell by hopes or fears ;  
Only, O Lord, stretch forth thy hand, be Thou  
The faithful guardian of the unuttered vow.

And when we turn again to the church door,

New champions for another human race ;  
Be near to keep us near Thee evermore,

And be our goal the Vision of Thy Face.  
Even when at last at threshold of our home  
Our absolution is, "Ye blessed, come."

## THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

TIME was when God conversed with man !

But Sinai's dark and quivering hill,  
And Majesty Divine unveiled

The human heart could scarcely fill :—  
Earthquake and whirlwind, storm and fire  
Have failed all, but one still voice  
Hath said through these two thousand years,  
“Come unto Me,” and we rejoice.

Oh, blest the paths Thy Feet have trod,

Oh, holy is the Holy Land ;

Oh, privileged the ears that heard

Thy voice, the lips that kissed Thy Hand ;  
But here the Incarnation's Fruit,

And here the Bliss of Palestine—  
Each altar is Thy place of rest,  
Each lowly heart Thy land Divine.

Once to a fair and new cleansed world,  
Before, perchance, too anxious eyes,  
Was spread a Sacrament of peace,  
A rainbow in the storm-swept skies ;  
And once a golden ladder stood  
Between a traveller and his home—  
Bright links which bound this world to that,  
But shadows of the Link to come.

Once to the loved and wayward race,  
When sin and weariness had cast  
A glamour round the Pharaos' throne,  
And sunshine o'er the slave's lone past,  
Was sent the first Viaticum—  
(Oh, patience of all-pitying Love !)  
Lay white upon the dewy ground  
Crumbs fallen from the Feast above.

"It is enough, Lord, take me hence,"—  
From Beersheba's untrodden wild  
In wakenings of his feverish sleep  
Cried Carmel's saint, the desert child.  
"Not yet, not now, O wearied one,  
Of Heaven-sent banquet take thy fill,  
Then journey on in strength Divine  
To yon dark cave in Horeb's hill."

The Veil was drawn, the gates unclosed,  
A mist of glory floated dim,  
Through temple of a vision rolled  
The Sanctus of the Seraphim ;  
To mortal man a Son of Light  
From fires whence saints are kindled came,  
And laid on pale and trembling lips  
Henceforth inspired, the Food of Flame.

O pilgrims to the Promised Land,  
O hermit 'neath the desert tree,  
O poet-prophet, Zion's seer,  
No babe in Christ need envy ye !  
The turf is white at morning hour,  
The gates stand wide, the veil is rent ;  
Our Food, our Fire, our God, our All  
Are in the Blessed Sacrament.

O altar lights, O altar flowers,  
O fragrance of the holy air ;  
O lamps of love, O flowers of faith,  
And incense of unuttered prayer ;  
O clasped hands, O thirsting hearts,  
O silence of the altar stair—  
Thou true Shekinah, Presence blest,  
In death's dark night Thy Light impart,

And give us in life's noontide heat

The Shadow of the Sacred Heart.

Grant that beneath the emerald thrones

We yet may praise Thee, night and day,  
Unveiled, before our shriven sight

When Sacraments shall pass away.

## THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

COME, Holy Sign ! and o'er mine eyes awaking  
Pass like a spirit till my heart is won ;  
And glorify the Cross I am uptaking  
Morning by morning, after God's Dear Son.

Come, Holy Sign ! when mid-day fires are blazing,  
And fallen natures crave for Eden's balm,  
And with thy chastening sweet, and power amazing  
Lure me to rest awhile 'neath prayer's green palm.

Come, Holy Sign ! traced by my guardian angel,  
To mind me of the mystery of that hour  
When Gabriel brought the world its great Evangel,  
And earth to Heaven was knit in Mary's bower.

When sin would tempt, and terrible temptation,  
Sign me Thyself, Thou Everlasting Lord,  
And give the memory of Thy pure oblation  
To flee the tempter's wile, the deed abhorred.

Lie on my brow, and with exceeding blessing  
    Bid the world's glories and its lights grow pale ;  
Lie on my breast, and with austere caressing,  
    Whisper of joys that never fade nor fail.

Come, Sacred Sign ! and at the awful altar  
    Be thou the sentinel of the Gift Divine ;  
And be my safeguard when my lips would falter  
    In the tribunal dread, thou strengthening sign.

O Holy Cross ! each dull prosaic duty  
    Is glittering with a brightness not its own ;  
Thou hast transformèd pain with strange new  
    beauty,  
And glorias mingle with life's monotone.

Bright is thy Sign, bright in the skies of even—  
    While Paters and while Aves soothe the air  
May I lie down, and, mid the peace of Heaven,  
    Know all is well, for Jesu's Cross is there.

## MORNING HYMN.

“ I rise, and yield my clasped hands to thee ;  
Henceforth the darkness hath no place in me,  
Thy sacrifice this day . . . ”

S. GREGORY NAZIANZEN.

WAKE, arise, the morn is gleaming  
Over hill and dale and sea ;  
Wake thee from thy peaceful dreaming,  
For thy God is calling thee.

Swift and cool as breath of morning  
Let the gale of grace steal in ;  
With new powers thy soul adorning,  
Chasing far the clouds of sin.

Be thy primal thoughts above thee,  
And thy wakening words a prayer ;  
May the memory He doth love thee  
Prove as sweet as morning air.

On thy breast and brow be tracèd  
Reverently the Holy Sign,  
And thy Saviour's Cross embracèd  
Ere thou rise to carry thine.

Toils await thee, fears assail thee  
For their failure or success ;—  
*They* may fail, He will not fail thee,  
But thy very loss can bless.

Wherefore, wherefore art thou fearful ;  
Hath He left his Israel ?  
Let this promise make thee cheerful  
All will work together well.

Jesus wakes thee ; saints surround thee ;  
Saints have shrunk from earthly days ;  
Let not fear or doubt confound thee,  
Thou art following in high ways.

No last night and no to-morrow  
Is thine own, but this to-day,  
With its coming joy or sorrow,  
Thou may'st claim,—and thou may'st say.—

“Thou art mine, O day, I greet thee,  
And I rise to do His will ;  
Though the doomed warriors meet me  
Heavenly hosts are stronger still.”

Wake thee, wake thee, bright and early,  
Hasten to the Feast Divine,  
When the dew-drops white and pearly  
Deck the young day's virgin shrine.

Or awake thee, do not falter  
To the silence of the wild,  
Where Himself the unseen altar  
Spreadeth for his desert child.

Waken, ready for the vernal  
Pastures of His Sacrament,  
But as sure His grace Supernal  
In the wilderness is sent.

Tarry not, for life flies fleetly—  
When the work of life is done  
Thou shalt rest, and so completely  
When the race of life is run.

Therefore rise, O happy mortal,  
Full of faith, and hope, and love ;  
Be this day another portal  
Opened to the days above.

## EVENING HYMN.

“O Thou my calm and peaceful evening, when the evening time of my life shall come give me to sleep in Thee, in tranquil sleep, and to taste that blissful rest which thou hast prepared in Thyself for them that love Thee.”

*Evening Prayer of S. Gertrude.*

O THOU my calm and solemn night

May I lie down in Thee !

Keep me beneath Thy Holy Sight

In peace and purity.

Accept the grace that hath been Thine,

Thou everlasting day,—

My sins forgive, my will resign,

And bless me while I pray.

Another span of time hath fled—

Nearer eternity !

Nearer the disembodied dead,

And am I nearer Thee ?

Nearer eternal bliss with Thee  
Or to eternal woe ?  
Dear Lord, Dear Lord, which shall it be ?  
Thy longing child would know.

Nor shall I know which it shall be  
Till, on the awful shore,  
Thy Voice shall say, "Come unto Me,"  
Or "Go for evermore."

For even uncertainty can bless,  
And do its certain part,  
To check us in our frowardness,  
To calm the untrustful heart.

Then may the veil fall kindly down  
Above the mystic years,  
Hiding from saints their dazzling crown,  
And calming doubts and fears.

'Tis well to walk with chastened love,  
To toil with careful hand,  
Lest to our souls Thy Canaan prove  
Alas ! no destined Land.

Yet, Lord, with no presumptuous prayer  
Would I in peace depart,  
Laying myself and every care  
Down on Thy Sacred Heart.

O Pillow of Eternity !  
Where all Thy saints shall rest,  
And in Thy Light the light may see,  
Thou Day-Star of the blest.

Who sleep in Thee in death awake  
Thy Paradise within ;  
Who sleep in life life's morn shall wake  
And find him free from sin.

The day of life is cold and drear,  
The path of life is steep ;  
Oh, give this night, Thou Saviour dear,  
To Thy beloved sleep !

For sleep we ask in life's rough way  
With patient, fervent prayer ;  
But wake us to the Eternal Day,  
For "there is no night there."

## MID-DAY HYMN.

“ Let nothing trouble thee,  
Let nothing affright thee ;  
All things pass away ;  
God never changes.”—S. TERESA.

WE need Thee at the eve and morn,  
And oh, we need Thee now !  
When life's too heavy crown of thorn  
Hangs on the aching brow.

O Saviour of thine Israel,  
How great that love of Thine !  
To feel for us by Jacob's Well  
Thy weariness Divine.

Thou who wouldst all our sorrows know  
In sympathy complete,  
Our hunger and our thirst below,  
Our weary hands and feet.

Thy beauty shed till these dull ways  
    Lead straight to streets of gold,  
Thou who didst guide 'neath veiled blaze  
    Thy favoured tents of old.

Our anthems swept the morning sky,  
    Shall mid-day's monotone  
And penitential litany  
    E'er reach the eternal Throne?

Though time may fail for many a word,  
    And brief and scant our prayer,  
The whispers of our souls are heard  
    While Glorias echo There.

Oh, hallowed is Thine altar's calm  
    Amid the toil and strife,  
And lulled beneath prayer's fruitful palm  
    The hurricane of life.

"Our Father," when our spirits fail,  
    Our Father still thou art!  
Our Jesus, when we say "All Hail,"  
    Thou enterest in the heart.

And Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove,  
With sevenfold graces, come !  
Send us, who pause to gaze above,  
A breeze from our true home.

At morn, and eve, and mid-day hour  
We give ourselves to Thee—  
Pour on our parchèd souls Thy shower  
Eternal Trinity.

## TO THE TELEGRAPH WIRE.

MESSENGER of joy and sorrow,  
Trembling on the evening air,  
What the burden of thy music ?  
What the message thou dost bear ?  
It is fraught with peace and comfort,  
Or with trouble and despair ?

Notes, but of no string Æolian,  
Harp, but not of Memnon thine ;  
Thine no tone to charm and soothe us,  
Echoing from a voice Divine ;  
Rather thou wouldst mar the anthem  
Of the quiet spirit's shrine.

Swifter, swifter than the swallow  
From the sunlit, palm-fringed land,  
Thou hast flown to us and spoken ;  
And, with quivering heart and hand,  
Grasp we at the rugged sentence  
Once by Orient breezes fanned.

Standing by the slow-paced river,  
I am wondering, as I hear  
That strange voice on gale of evening  
Drawing nearer and more near ;  
And I marvel, is its meaning  
Many a smile or many a tear ?

Does it tell a new bird warbleth  
In some Heaven-belovèd nest ;  
Or some tired soul is lying  
On the pillow of God's rest ;  
Or some saint-like soul is passing  
Thro' the portals of the blest ?

On some fireside, is it falling  
With a thunderbolt of grief,  
Or with joy like lightning flashes  
Does it bring intense relief ?  
Changing life, reversing fortune  
In one mandate calm and brief.

Messenger of joy and sorrow !  
Are we happier now than when  
Grief came deadened, joy came gently  
To this mountain-cloistered glen ?

Now the banished friends seem nearer,  
Are they more beloved than then?

Thou hast never brought a message  
From the country of the blest ;  
Thou canst tell not of their welfare  
Whom we loved and once caressed.  
Dost thou minister to comfort,  
Or to feverish unrest?

Messenger of dead and living !  
Oh, that on ethereal wing,  
Like the dove o'er falling waters,  
Thou *one* leaf hadst power to bring  
From the Land that is to heaven  
As to Summer is the Spring.

Mighty power of iron ages,  
Trembling on the evening air ;  
Swifter still on noiseless pinion  
Is the lowliest spirit's prayer.  
Space is vanquished, time o'erpassèd  
By the lips that speak even there.

## RETURN FROM THE HARVEST.

THOU shalt come again, thou shalt come again,  
Heavy laden with golden sheaves,  
When the crown of age will lie soft and white  
'Neath the halo of dark green leaves.

'Tis a weary thing to go forth alone—  
Oh, the strength of lingering hands !  
So many to leave and so few to meet  
In the unknown, the stranger lands.

And cold and drear is the earliest dawn—  
Oh, the thought of a life-time's day !  
And the peace of night when 'twill all be o'er  
In the distance so far away.

Oh, youth is sorrowful ! Oh, youth is sad !  
'Tis a fearful thing to be young,  
When the match is put to the kindling brain,  
And the nerves like a fine harp strung.

When through the veins of the spirit runs,  
Even the blood royal of gifts sublime ;  
And far o'er the hills they have never trod  
The deep bells of ambition chime.

'Tis a fearful thing to be very young,  
With the long fierce battle before ;  
To hear so little, and see so much  
Through the chinks of the opening door.

There is sunshine bright in the old home hearth,  
And strong is each lingering hand ;  
And not flesh nor blood, and not kith nor kin,  
On the unknown threshold stand.

Thou shalt come again, thou shalt come again,  
With thy sheaves in their bands of gold !  
But the ashes are white in thine ancient hearth  
And the lingering hands are cold.

Thou shalt come again, thou shalt come again,  
With a beautiful victor's crown !  
But who will rise up from their graves to greet  
In the streets of thy boyhood's town ?

O thou strange, sad life ! For which would we be,  
The bird who is quitting his eaves,  
Or the reaper who bends at set of sun  
'Neath the burden of golden sheaves ?

Ah, rather the reaper at set of sun,  
Who returneth no more to roam ;  
For, after the harvest is peace and rest,  
And the joy of the Harvest Home.

## TO THE EXPRESS TRAIN

ONWARD, onward, ever onward,  
Resting not by day or night,  
Like a spirit in the darkness,  
Like a monster in the light.  
Now thy shrill, sharp voice upraising  
In the quiet evening air,  
Forcing memories of the world  
In the holy house of prayer.

Swifter thine than was the pinion  
Of the fabled steed of old ;  
Thine is strong for age of iron,  
His was fair for age of gold.  
Onward on thy way defiant,  
Sweeping through the pastoral land  
Till even cloistered groves and gardens  
Are by ruthless vapours fanned.

With the ocean of existence  
At its holiest sunlit tide ;  
With first moments, new beginnings,  
With the bridegroom and the bride ;  
With the fatherless and widow,  
With the dying and the dead ;  
With our failures and successes,  
With the crowned and prostrate head.

With the burden of long partings,  
With light weight of brief farewells ;  
With the hope that hopeth all things,  
With the inkling that foretells ;  
Thou art speeding, steed of iron,  
And thy careless shrieks ascend  
Ere the *Salve* of the stranger  
Drowns the *Vale* of the friend.

Mighty steed, dost thou not sever  
Us from ages long ago ?  
Vainly we essay to image  
Pilgrims on their pathways slow ;  
All our pasts with pasts are linked  
In one common general pace—

Abraham travelled like our fathers,  
We are on a swifter race !

Iron steed, put forth thy vigour !  
Mighty one, increase thy powers !  
Save for us the winged moments,  
Grasp for us the rushing hours—  
While the hearths of home gleam softly  
In the iron-paved glen,  
And the fixed stars gaze calmly  
On the race of restless men.

We have little time to linger,  
For Eternity is nigh,  
And the end of all our journeys  
Will be this, to rest and die.  
Oh, the King's Mysterious Highway  
That our feet have never trod !  
Oh, the horses and the chariot  
Of the Paradise of God !

## MOSES ON THE NILE.

THOU dark eyed Babe ! Thou hadst a softer rest  
Than now within thy rigorous ark of clay ;  
On the warm pillow of a mother's breast  
Thy happy head was laid but yesterday.

Thou hear'st the ancient river onward steal,  
Thy dusky sister would not see thee die ;  
But to her father's God makes wild appeal,  
Or soothes thee with a Hebrew lullaby.

Oh, naught to thee thy heritage of woe—  
An alien from thy home, a doomed slave ;  
Nor knewest thou the royal maiden slow  
Draw downward to the Nile's benignant wave.

Hot were thy tears, and sad thy new-born life !  
Thou goodly babe, could'st thou have gazed and  
seen

The Pharaoh's court, the dreary, sensual strife,  
Then thy dread call on Midian's pastures green ;

The awful mission of the desert years,  
The weariness, the blame, the wayward wills—  
Thine eyes undimmed by many a decade's tears  
Gaze from thy deathbed on the vine-clad hills.

So, who were brave to face life's dull affray  
Could they the armed hosts of sin behold ;  
Best to abide, until the appointed day,  
We hear strange footsteps stir youth's sands of  
gold.

Hide us, Dear Lord, 'mid reeds and lotus flowers !  
Thy Light within, we are not in the dark ;  
Let us lie still, and bless the tranquil hours,  
Ere yet Thy Hand draw in life's little ark.

We dare not face the desert of our years,  
But with the journey will Thy succour be ;—  
To-day we need it for our infant tears,  
To-morrow still is veiled in mystery.

Thou art enough for wilderness or throne,  
Thou art enough for city or for cell ;  
And give us grace to gaze without a moan  
On Earth's bright Canaan, saying, "It is well."

Then shut our eyes to vine-clad hill and dale,  
To-morrow to behold the unclouded sun ;  
Shut them, to open them within the veil,  
Our journey past, our better Canaan won.

## TO A PHOTOGRAPH ALBUM.

'Tis no fair illumination  
By a consecrated hand,  
When each touch 'neath inspiration  
Grew, by prayer and praises fanned ;  
When Art felt its dedication  
To the Everlasting land.

'Tis no phantasy primeval  
Of a world before the Fall ;  
'Tis no volume mediaeval  
Which the good old days recall ;  
Not with tournament coeval,  
Not with lute and madrigal.

Were or are these modern faces  
Which the white page thickly fill ;  
Some feet now are on their races,  
Some have climbed life's rugged hill,  
In some hands are trumps and aces,  
Some have lost, are losing still.

Who is this? Oh, judge not quickly  
O'er his years with folly rife.  
Had thy thorns been sown as thickly  
Who had reaped thy sheaves of life?  
Dull, despised, and poor, and sickly,  
Hadst thou triumphed in the strife?

'Neath thy cradle curtain sleeping,  
Little babe, doth life begin :  
Wakening soon, with wonder peeping  
At the future far within—  
Angels have thee in their keeping !—  
Thou hast power to lose or win.

Reverent brow ! so grave and hoary,  
Softly gleams thine aureole ;  
Thou art 'mid the sons of glory,  
Bright and beautiful thy soul ;  
Legend owns thee now and story,  
Fame hath written thee on her roll.

O dear lips ! so red and glowing  
When I sought one sinless kiss,

O sweet soul ! on whom bestowing  
Grace that I was doomed to miss ?  
With thy three small mirrors throwing  
Reflex of their mother's bliss.

Mine old friend ! kind, grave, and gentle,  
Thou my friend, my friend indeed !  
To yon ancient home parental  
Thou didst come in hour of need ;  
When, 'mid visions transcendental,  
Life was running fast to seed.

Art thou living, art thou dying,  
Where have roamed those faithful feet ?  
Art thou laughing, art thou crying,  
Are we fated yet to meet ?  
Art thou in thy green grave lying,  
With the daisies for thy sheet ?

Who is she ? Oh, laugh not lightly  
O'er her wan and haggard mien ;

Penance robes have clasped her tightly,  
Think of Mary Magdalene :  
With hot tears, and daily, nightly,  
Doth she weep what she hath been.

World-worn man, how time is stealing ;  
I remember thee caressed  
By thy fair young mother, kneeling,  
In thy baby presence blest ;  
Now beneath the palm's dark ceiling  
Hast thou built an Indian nest.

Who is this with clear eyes gazing  
From life's morning, cold and grey,  
To where mid-day suns are blazing,  
And the shadows flee away ?  
She was full of grace amazing,  
And she lived to toil and pray.

Yet no Kalendar hath named her  
In the galaxy Divine,  
And no holy Church hath claimed her  
For the patron of its shrine ;

Poet, painter, hath not framed her ;—  
Say, O Heaven, is she not Thine ?

O this girl ! the empty-pated,  
Heavy eyes and vacant mind ;  
She, to dulness dedicated,  
And in dreariness enshrined ;  
Ne'er cast down and ne'er elated,  
Who in her can landmark find ?

Peace, my soul ! withhold thy scorning,  
She is dear in Holier Sight ;  
Poor, perchance, her wits adorning,  
And her genius veiled in night :  
On the Resurrection morning  
She may daze thee with her light.

Shut again life's once read pages,  
Shut the volume of to-day ;  
Place it with the tomes of sages,  
Yet not very far away ;  
More than dead and buried ages  
Are to-day and yesterday.

Thy dear souls, O Love eternal,  
    We would love for evermore ;  
For the living, life supernal  
    We would reverently implore ;  
For the dead, that pastures vernal  
    Feed them on Heaven's strange new shore.

IN THE MIDST OF THE PARADISE  
OF GOD.

“Requiem æternam dona eis Domine, et lux perpetua  
luceat eis.”

WHERE are they now? 'Twas but a little while  
the death sweat from their brow  
We wiped—dying, still they were ours, still, though  
the sun had set of glorious powers,  
We loved them—better in that twilight haze than  
when at noon-day their resplendent blaze  
Lit up the deep ravine and favoured glen, where in  
the sunshine basked their fellow-men.  
Where are they now? we saw them last sweet souls  
in fragile form, quivering beneath the fury of  
death's storm  
Like trees whose shade hath blest full many a June,  
at last are ta'en some autumn afternoon.  
We thought, “A moment more all will be o'er!”

128 *In the Midst of the Paradisc of God.*

And strange the lull that thought around us cast  
One wild sweep of the blast,  
But one more wave, and then yon side the river  
shall they be safe for ever and for ever,  
In the midst of the Paradise of God.

Where are they now? Seek we no more save this,  
to know that they are there, safe in that frontier  
realm of ethereal prayer,  
Each dear soul waiting for the finished bliss, each  
dear soul welcomed by the Saviour's kiss,  
To the midst of the Paradise of God.

Check we rude praise, lest haply they should hear,  
these souls, still wet with penitential tear ;  
They would not by a lying world be shriven, on  
whom have fallen the absolving words of  
Heaven ;  
Rather may Requiems than laudations rise ; for  
requiems are as Eden's lullabies.  
They know what sin is now, their own sins know,  
as wiser in the Eternal dawn they grow.  
Welcome to those who see the secret stain, the  
healing ointment of the penal pain ;

Welcome the breath of purgatorial flame, till  
envying angels own no touch of blame.

They are within, in that deep sweet within, whence  
is no going out to grief or sin ; \*

Far in that silent secrecy of home, whence none go  
out but many yet shall come,

To the midst of the Paradise of God.

Where are they now ? Ah, wherefore need we seek  
to lift the veil that shroudeth Eden's features,  
still and pale ?

Ah, wherefore would we vainly strive to reach o'er  
the dead seas that sentinel that beach ?

They are within ; not trembling at the gate, but far  
within they on our coming wait ;

Beyond our nights and toils, our wear and tear—  
there is no toil, and there is no night there,

In the midst of the Paradise of God.

\* “ What must the ‘ within doors ’ be where is no more  
going out of doors ? Innermost depth of home ! Sweet  
secrecy of dwelling. Oh, sweet place to dwell in, where is no  
darkness, no bitterness of evil thoughts, no throng of temp-  
tations and griefs crying for help ! Is it not that secret  
place into which that well-deserving servant shall enter, to  
whom the Lord shall say, *Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*  
‘ This is that deep sweet secrecy of home. ’—S. AUGUSTINE.

130 *In the Midst of the Paradise of God.*

Ask them not back again ; for oh, what soul would  
turn when it hath reached the happy goal ?

What victor would the battle try again, when he  
looks calmly on the conquered plain ?

And, strange sad thought ! their place, their day is  
gone : man hath one day, one place, but one  
alone !

And were the dearest back again to come, strange  
were his welcome to a strange old home !

Here he is needed not ; but in those spheres that  
we behold not, blinded by our tears,

His place is ready, his long day begun, where  
candle lights not, nor yet moon nor sun,

In the midst of the Paradise of God.

How fares it with them there ? Oh, are they well ?

Oh, could they send some wingèd one to tell !

But Faith, like dying Moses, long must stand on  
Nebo, gazing at the Promised Land ;

Till Life Eternal, 'mid thy blaze of gold, Love sees  
at last each dear one's special fold ;

O Dove ! sweet Dove ! come laden with green leaves,  
a nest awaits thee 'neath the spirit's eaves ;

*In the Midst of the Paradise of God.* 131

O Messengers ! unto our Canaan go, but come again,  
    bending with fruits that grow  
On that Great Tree whose foliage shall not fall ; on  
    that Great Tree of Life that feedeth all  
In the midst of the Paradise of God.

The midst of the Paradise of God ! Oh, but to name  
    thee is a pillow of still rest, thou shadowy  
    inmost cloister of the blest.

Where is the Dawn of the Eternal years, the in-  
    completed bliss, but free from fears ;

Fair paths, but not Jerusalem's own street ? Scarce  
    on pure gold could tread these dust-stained  
    feet !

Sweet rest, though each doth the long vigil keep,  
    yet giveth He His Own beloved sleep,  
In the midst of the Paradise of God.

## JUDGE NOT.

SOME seeds are sown in fertile fields,  
Some win the talents ten ;  
And some are hung as lamps of light  
To guide their fellow-men ;  
And lives there are, beclouded lives  
Of failure and distress—  
O world, the walls are high and fair  
That garrison success !

Dear soul, how sad thy little span  
Of five and twenty years :  
The thorns that strewed thy wayward path  
Were mingled with our tears ;  
For thee the garden bore no vine,  
None planted thy fig tree,  
And 'twixt us and thy death-bed rolled  
The broad Pacific Sea.

But when we brought thee o'er these waves

We said, "Forget all now,

Temptation cannot tear her soul,

Sin cannot line her brow ;

The wicked cease from troubling her,

The weary are at rest—"

We laid a wreath of violets,

*Not* lilies, on thy breast !

With no rebuke, with reverence,

With love, and quivering breath

We said, "Oh, hush, she hath received

The sacrament of death !"

The tapers on the altar gleamed

Amid thy funeral flowers,

And Jesus' sacrifice we pled

For thy dear soul and ours.

The Magdalene hath passed the gate

Where stand proud Pharisees ;

And some are first who here were last,

God's ways are mysteries.

Where verdicts of the world are changed  
In Court of last appeal,  
Where on the everlasting doom  
Is set the final seal,  
The utmost debt of thy poor life,  
O sister, must be paid—  
By Judge more merciful than man  
The balances are weighed !

## THE HOLY WILL.

“Fiat, laudetur, atque in æternam superexaltetur,  
sanctissima altissima, amabilissima voluntas Dei in  
omnibus.”

IN the spirit's central ocean  
Is a deep exceeding still ;  
'Tis the home of calm devotion  
To th' Almighty Father's will.

There all blessed saints are meeting,  
Peaceful in the inmost shrine,  
And with trembling lips repeating,  
“Father, not my will, but Thine.”

Hurricanes o'erhead are roaring,  
And the storm-clouds hide the sun ;  
But beneath are saints adoring,  
Saying, “May Thy will be done !”

Shipwrecks of fair hopes lie scattered  
On the beach of hearts forlorn ;  
Lives are lost, and gifts are shattered,  
Joys are dead ere they are born.

Heaven's decrees wild wills are scorning ;  
But the favoured saints beneath,  
Till the Resurrection morning  
Bend to mystery, bear with death.

Will of God ! Shouldst Thou assign me  
Grief and trouble, anguish sore,  
Yet may I in peace resign me,  
And Thy veiled ways adore.

Will of God ! Shouldst Thou confound me  
In eternity of woe,  
With mine arms would I surround thee,  
And I would not let thee go !

Will of God ! Be thou fulfilled !  
We would kiss thee with pure love,  
Asking that all wills be stillèd  
That are fashioned not above.

And if murmuring were availing  
    From our griefs to set us free,  
If the voice of restless wailing  
    Could a stay or comfort be,

We would murmur not, but rather  
    Say in weariness and loss  
Give us, O Almighty Father,  
    What Thou willest of the Cross.

For the Heaven-sent cross is healing,  
    And the Heaven-filled cup is balm;  
And on Calvary saints are kneeling  
    As the pilgrims 'neath the palm.

If the Heaven-filled cup be spillèd,  
    And in vain the Heaven-sent cross,  
If in vain our pangs have thrillèd,  
    Who shall estimate the loss?

If we will not take the trial  
    That Thou willest for our weal,  
Shall at last Thy dread denial  
    An eternal sorrow seal.

If there be a joy to cheer us,  
And to prove we follow Thee,  
To assure us Thou art near us,  
And wilt keep us near to Thee,

'Tis, when, tho' with lips that falter,  
Yet with steadfast heart and mind,  
We can bring unto Thine altar  
Offerings of our wills resigned,

Here our human wills all stillèd  
In the silence of the breast ;  
There the Holy Will fulfilled  
In our Everlasting Rest.

## A FUNERAL IN VENICE.

CARRY her down the liquid street,  
By the palaces old and brown ;  
Though thine oars may quiver, thy heart may beat,  
Oh, carry her gently down.

Carry her down the silent street ;  
She will lie on her bier as pale  
As a gathered lily, exceeding sweet,  
Untouched by the world's rude gale.

Carry her down the mournful street ;  
The flower of the waves was she ;  
Nor gave she the world the kiss of her feet,  
For she lived her life on the sea.

Nor knew she the breeze thro' the forest trees,  
But, oft down the watery dell,  
It wafted good-morrow o'er laughing seas,  
And breathed at night its farewell.

And oh, there is weeping of wind and wave,  
And troubled each blue lagoon,  
When thou floatest her down to her lonely grave,  
In the light of the golden noon.

There is a cloister of rigorous rule,  
The waves are its awful grille ;  
There is a city, 'tis peopled full,  
Its streets are silent and still.

And there is a garden with spring flowers bright,  
The fairest eye may not see—  
And a lonely island with verdure dight,  
'Tis a churchyard in the sea.

Ev'n there wilt thou bear her from sight away,  
While Venezia's church bells ring,  
In the unveiled light of the radiant day  
While the priests of San Marco sing.

And, afar, past the Lido's vernal beach,  
O'er the Adriatic sea,  
Will the sound of that dear one's requiems reach.  
Oh, music of death to me !

Through life I shall think of a fair green land,  
    'Tis a churchyard in the sea—  
And through life I shall cling to a cold, white hand,  
    'Tis the warmest on earth to me !

And white are the arms that enfold me round,  
    White arms they are of a soul ;  
And through life I shall hear the church bells  
    sound,  
    For her and for me they toll.

And above the thought of that grave of graves,  
    Of that churchyard in the sea,  
Comes a thought that sootheth my soul's sad  
    waves,  
    And bringeth strange peace to me

Of a country that hath no churchyard green—  
    In the midst is a fadeless tree—  
Of a city where funeral never hath been,  
    And where there is no more sea.

## ON A NAME IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

WE wonder if his life hath been  
Tempestuous, or in all serene :—  
We know that he did live and die—  
Veiled in the past's dim mystery  
All his career and history,  
But one vague name to curious eye.

Was his life different from ours?  
Doubtless of sunshine and of showers  
As were the lives of fellowmen,—  
No lives are all so white and fair  
There is not something wanting there,  
All know one dear untrodden glen!

Even in the land where sunny seas  
Temper the rush of desert breeze,  
And Heaven and earth in love are met,  
In cloister of the tamarisk bowers,

There is some ill to mar bright hours,  
For there is Eden to regret !

The dullest life hath hidden smile—  
Even to Jan Mayen's awful isle  
The Arctic Summer slowly comes ;  
The sunshine of a few fair days  
Bids that sad region waft the praise  
Echoing from Europe's happier homes.

Even on its bosom bleak and bare  
The seal of the Creator's care  
Is set,—the loving eye of faith  
Discerns Him when the ice-girt shore  
To dimmer vision proves no more  
Than Nature's bed of hopeless death.

This, then, we know—this well-known tale !  
But gladly would we lift the veil,  
O Brother, from thine earthly strife—  
As vainly would we seek to know  
The details of thy joy or woe,  
And see thee in thine endless life.

144    *On a Name in the Old Testament.*

We know, for these five thousand years,  
In some dread world of bliss or tears

Thy deathless spirit hath begun  
The employment that shall never end—  
Human, though vague, yet living friend,  
Like ours thy sands of life still run.

## TABOR, SINAI, ALVERNA.

HIS face was gleaming with celestial light,  
Above it hung the foretaste of a crown,  
When, from long days on yon mysterious height,  
The sore-tried prophet to the world came down.

Scarce had he rested since that distant hour  
When the royal maiden clasped him to her heart,  
Fresh gathered by the stream, a vernal flower,  
And gave him in her father's home a part.

By peerless splendours wooed, but never won,  
Mid Egypt's wisdom when the kind world  
smiled,

In Pharaoh's court, in City of the Sun,  
By throne and idol ever unbeguiled,

Till, now, on Sinai's sun-steeped solitude,  
He sees by faith the Canaan of the soul ;

While on the threshold of Beatitude  
Even weary feet attain the long sought goal.

Perchance before his spirit may have blazed  
The vista of the inner courts Divine ;  
On Abraham and Jacob may have gazed  
Those eyes that now with dazzling radiance  
shine.

And even beyond the Patriarch's diadem,  
His shriven sight hath penetrated far  
To where on thy pure skies, O Bethlehem,  
Rose o'er a midnight world thy Morning Star.

Saw he his death-bed, when the Promised Land  
Should lure him like bright form and sunlit  
face,—  
He should not kiss that face, nor touch that hand,  
Nor give that heritage even one embrace.

He should not, but what grief can harm him, when  
The vision of some everlasting hill,  
Of winged ones within Heaven's utmost glen,  
Is lingering in his happy memory still.

Yet must he leave the clear, celestial air,  
For desert journeying and beclouded hours ;  
From yon high mount of ecstasy and prayer  
He turns to sin's foul strife in doomèd bowers.

Once only in the Three and Thirty years  
The glory of mount Tabor round Thee shone ;  
Before Thee lay dark scorn and Human fears,  
Gethsemane, and Calvary's awfuller throne.

And if Thou deignest on Thy Saints to shine,  
Yet 'tis Thy Cross must clasp them to Thy  
breast—

As when to Francis on the Apennine  
Thy shining sorrows were in Love impressed.

Tabor, and Sinai, and the Apennine  
Our eyes ne'er imaged, our feet ne'er trod ;  
Yet may we venture to the steeps Divine,  
And see even here the opening gates of God.

We would not linger in the realms of love—  
Beneath us lie dark lane and stunning street—  
And yet 'tis well but once to be above,  
But once to clasp Thy Hand and kiss Thy Feet.

One Sinai in that meek, heroic life,  
    One Tabor in the Human Life Divine,  
And one Alverna, with high rapture rife,  
    And then the brimming cup of bitter wine.

One inkling of the life within the Veil,  
    One foretaste of what Heaven and God will be,  
Then down the mountain path, where suns grow  
    pale,  
    Then the long triumph of Eternity !

## THE CHURCHYARD OF THE YEARS.

### I.

WITHIN Time's Campo Santo lie the years—

And as on memory's faded turf I stand

'Mid silent graves by prayers of Eden fanned,

Amid the little hills of hopes and fears,

Amid the narrow beds of sighs and tears,

It seems, as tho' even to this cloistered land

Fame to some favoured cells had stretched

her hand

With wreaths immortelle from far hemispheres

For ever green. And some forgotten rest ;

None sang laudations on their funeral day,

On them have fallen from gardens of the  
blest

Good seeds that pierce even here Time's chilly  
clay,

As tho' the angels knew which years were  
best,

And where men had despised would reverence pay.

II.

O Campo Santo ! in unbroken calm

Have we not laid to rest one blessed year ?

One with no new-dead hope, no new-born fear,

With perfumes of strong love we would embalm,

On its still bosom place the victor's palm,

Within love's fine-woven cerements, light and  
clear,

Sadly enfold it on its flower-strewn bier,

And sing above its head a requiem psalm

That it may sleep. None taken in their  
prime,

O Campo Santo, rest beneath thy sod !

Each in full age has heard the last bell's  
chime ;

The old son follows where the old sire trod ;

And we amid these buried years of time

Gaze upward to th' eternal years of God.

## THE DEDICATION OF THE VIRGIN IN THE TEMPLE.

FAIR are the flowers when the mountains are vernal,  
Bright are the blossoms by blue Galilee ;  
Virgin of Israel ! the Eden Eternal,  
Hides in her valleys no lily like thee !

Garden enclosed, and unapproached Fountain,  
Quick-burning bush that hath never consumed ;  
Mystical Rose, and majestic Mountain,  
Vine by ineffable graces perfumed.

Hail, Holy Queen ! from Eternity sealed,  
Queen of the Seraphim, clothed with the Light;  
Mother and Maid to Isaias revealed,  
Star of the Ocean illuming our night.

Pure the fixed stars o'er the Orient bending,  
Clear are the planets in Palestine's sky ;  
Thou art the Moon through the firmament  
wending,  
Borrowing thy beauty from splendours on high.

152 *The Dedication of the Virgin in the Temple.*

Fair are the hills the Great City enshrining,  
    Golden the Gate to the King's Holy Throne ;  
Angels around thee their pinions are twining ;  
    Thou art the Gate whence One entereth alone.

Give thyself ! give thyself ! Ne'er did oblation  
    Rise from an altar so pure as thy heart ;  
Angels look down on the great Dedication,  
    Bride of the Spirit high-favoured thou art.

Give thyself ! give thyself ! spotless and holy,  
    Pass up the stair to the Temple Divine ;  
Give thyself ! give thyself ! humble and lowly,  
    Thou too His Temple, His Dwelling, His  
    Shrine !

Ere the first Ave shall wake o'er Creation,  
    Ere Earth is wedded to Heaven in thee,  
Give thyself, waiting thy God's Incarnation,  
    Virgin for ever, yet Mother to be.

Give thyself ! give thyself ! ere His appearing  
    Whom thou shalt hail as thy Saviour and Son ;  
Shame, the sword's anguish, for His sake not  
    fearing,  
    Praying that only His will may be done.

*The Dedication of the Virgin in the Temple.* 153

Give thyself, give thyself, Bride of Eternity !

Ere o'er thy wondering heart Gabriel's words  
thrill ;

Blessed, oh, blessed in virgin maternity,

Aye, but more blessed in doing His Will.

## INCURABLE.

“ Per agoniam et passionem tuam libera nos, Jesu.”

AFAR have fled life's visions bright,  
Its hopes have past away,  
As from the shadows of the night  
Escape the joys of day.

And thou hast seen in clouds depart  
Dear treasures, one by one ;  
And watched, with all too wistful heart,  
Full many a set of sun !

Each wondrous work, each noble plan,  
Sealed by faith and prayer,  
For love of God, for love of man,  
Seem castles in the air.

For now thy poor and helpless form  
Laid on a bed of pain,  
Beneath an overwhelming storm,  
Can never rise again.

And never down the stirring street  
To many a welcome door  
Shall hasten thy fast chainèd feet—  
Thy walks on earth are o'er.

Half envious visions lured thy soul  
In these departed days ;  
And many an immemorial goal  
Awoke thy rapturous praise.

Then wouldst thou weep for martyr's tears,  
Longing thou too might'st feel  
The fire and sword, the shame and fears,  
That paved the way to weal.

Then wouldst thou envy cloistered maids  
The narrow paths they trod ;  
Who sought, in consecrated glades,  
The Vision of their God.

Now upward gaze, high favoured one,  
To thine own glorious life  
In city of the unclouded sun,  
The guerdons of thy strife.

In thee are sown immortal seeds ;  
Oh, may they bear the flowers  
Of saintliness, to deck the meads  
That compass Eden's bowers ;

A mighty work for thee is found,  
Lie still, and do it well—  
A surer grille doth clasp thee round,  
Than shields yon cloistered cell.

Nor need'st thou mourn one vanished gift,  
Nor wish it back again ;  
From these poor ruins thine eyes uplift  
To win the talents ten.

Hang patient still by Jesu's side,  
Albeit in grief and fears,  
While in a hot and feverish tide  
Rush on thy human tears

Beneath thy crown of thorns is laid  
A gentle piercèd hand—  
O Christ's own Spouse, be not afraid—  
Doth he not understand ?

O altar, with fair linen dight  
For ceaseless sacrifice !  
O censer, whence by day and night  
Immortal perfumes rise !

O Levi, vowed to holiest things—  
Thy heritage the Lord ;  
O helpless hands, and feet, but wings  
To heavenliest summits soared.

Thou, for whose gifts we may not pine,  
Else asking things too high,  
And venturing near the awful shrine  
We touch the ark and die.

With special love thy Lord must love  
Thine everlasting Soul,  
To send thee from the realms above  
This sharp but sacred dole.

And oh, amid the many homes  
What will thy dwelling be !  
And when at last His kingdom comes,  
What province waiteth thee !

Now every prayer is granted thee,  
Not one ungratified ;  
Save this that thou mayst one day be  
'Mid the Beatified.

Lie still, for even that utmost prayer  
Is almost answered now—  
I saw, 'twas in a vision fair,  
A bright crown touch thy brow.

## HE MAY. COME.

HE may come, and he may not ;  
He may not, yet he may—  
And O, my quick, untrustful heart,  
In restless agony thou art  
For yearning that he may !

At eight o'clock he leaves his home,  
Down the long lane will pass,  
And then before the little gate  
A moment he will hesitate  
With eyes fixed on the grass.

Two visions rise around him then,  
Two paths stretch out before ;  
The one by hedgerows bright and green  
And banks of violet between—  
It leadeth to my door.

The other where the fir trees moan  
Afar across the wold ;  
Into a silent space of mist—  
Nor sun, nor moon, nor star hath kissed—  
A dreariness untold.

'Tis nine o'clock, the fire burns low,  
Now am I unto madness near ;—  
One little hour will settled be  
My bright or clouded destiny,  
Someone will be, or not be here.

Two visions rise before mine eyes—  
The one is of a crownèd bride—  
Of a brave heart, of faithful hands  
That clasp me in all hallowed bands,  
In sunshine of a dear fireside.

The other of the long lone wold—  
A joyless hearth, a life apart,  
The thunder clouds, the bitter gale,  
And sight that doth for weeping fail,  
A silent, loving, unloved heart.

Was that his knock ? Keep pulse and heart  
These throbs for fevered hand and breast ;  
The path that he will take to-night  
Hath pre-ordained the Infinite,  
And it will surely be the best !

## A TRAVELLER'S HYMN.

“ My Face shall go before thee, and I will give thee rest.”

THOU Who hast loved Thy pilgrims  
Since from the Chaldean land  
The faithful Father hastened  
To follow Thy command ;  
Who promised weary Jacob  
He yet again should come,  
In peacefulness and plenty,  
Unto his ancient home ;  
Who led'st the chosen children  
O'er desert and o'er deep ;  
Thou art the God of Israel  
Who dost not rest nor sleep ;  
Still send us on our journeys  
Thy Promise sweet and blest—  
“ My Face shall go before thee,  
And I will give thee rest.”

Still through the age of iron  
Race on our restless feet,  
And dear ones weep behind us,  
And strange ones wait to greet.  
The agony of parting,  
The love of lingering hands,  
The shrinking from the desert,  
The traveller understands.  
And still where we may wander  
The old hearth sun will shine,  
Its warmth will cheer the spirit  
'Neath Alp and Apennine ;  
And of each deep petition  
This is the long refrain—  
“ Wherever Thou dost take me,  
Oh, bring me home again ! ”  
Swept on the wings of iron,  
Along the iron way,  
Be Thou my Light by midnight,  
My shadowy Cloud by day ;  
And may I lie as tranquil  
As bird within her nest,  
With Thy Dear Presence with me,  
Thyself to give me rest.

So may the age of iron  
Be still the age of faith ;  
For, with Thy Presence with me,  
Even science shall not scathe.  
And may I prove a patriot  
Unto that native land  
Whence kindred spirits welcome,  
Whence beckoneth many a hand  
And see by faith unwavering  
The pilgrim's only goal,  
That fair and peopled dwelling,  
The city of the soul.  
He who on his stone pillow  
Doth fall asleep with prayer,  
In visions of the midnight  
Shall see the Golden Stair ;  
For him Thy Promise soundeth  
As music of the blest—  
“ My Face shall go before thee,  
And I will give thee rest.”

And on the great last journey  
Thine aid shall never fail ;  
Across the silent River,  
Adown the shadowy vale,

May wingèd ones be near me  
    To guide my trembling feet,  
To pass the strange new threshold,  
    To tread the strange new street !  
Be with me on Thine altar,  
    Be with me on the Rood,  
In penance and in unction,  
    To wash me in Thy blood,  
Then say, when Thou hast entered,  
    The temple of my breast—  
“My Face shall go before thee,  
    And I will give thee rest.”

## NEAR TO THY CROSS.

“You shall indeed drink of the chalice that I drink of.”

NEAR to Thine altar, Lord,  
So near I may surely feel  
The very breeze through the fadeless trees  
Of Eden around me steal.

Near to Thy Tabor, Lord,  
In pure, ethereal prayer,—  
Long watch to keep on the sun-drenched steep,—  
'Tis good, 'tis good to be there!

Near to Thy Throne, O Lord,  
Where the Sons of Light fall down,  
And the golden floor is scattered o'er  
With many a glittering crown.

Near to Thy Sacred Heart,  
Dead to each passion of sin :  
O cloistered home ! where no ill can come,  
How fain would I enter in !

Near to Thy Cross, O Lord !

Aye close to Thy bleeding tree !

The draught Divine from that cup of Thine—

This only is promised me.

Altar, and Tabor, and Throne,

And the Bliss of Thy Sacred Heart,

In that Cross Divine, in that Cup's sharp wine,

Thou wilt give me, for there Thou art.

## A BABY'S GRAVE.

I SAW a Baby half asleep  
In silken cradle laid ;  
While bright blue eyes were fain to peep,  
Scarce trustful, scarce afraid.

I saw two feet just taught to stand  
Upon the nursery floor,  
Then heard of mighty journey planned  
Far as the nursery door.

I saw a Baby crowned with flowers,  
Most beautiful, most bright ;  
Himself amid the golden dowers  
That crowned his home with light.

Two eyes fast shut, clasped hands I saw—  
It was his primal prayer—  
“God bless papa, God bless mama,  
And take of baby care.”

The meadows of another Spring  
With other flowers are strewed—  
I saw a dove of silvery wing  
Beneath the Holy Rood.

The darlings of another Spring  
With other flowers are crowned,  
And little hands their treasures bring  
To sprinkle holy ground.

I saw a bed laid wondrous low,  
With covering cold and green :—  
I said, “Is it all over now,  
Thou little life serene?”

The summer sun of northern clime  
Leaves, ere it fades away,  
A long warm kiss to greet the prime  
Of every unborn day ;

So through the stricken night of life,  
Rosy as set of sun,  
A warm kiss breathes above the strife  
That Baby's work is done.

The innocents with hallowed mirth  
Play in the Border Land,  
But to his unforgotten hearth  
Stretches a little hand.

O marble cross, O little dove,  
O race of life soon run ;  
O Bird within the nest above,  
O work of life well done.

O marble cross, O pure white dove,  
O cradle cold and green ;  
May memories of our long lives prove  
As spotless, as serene.

O garner of our vernal flowers,  
O kiss of setting sun ;  
May we too say at evening hours  
The work of life is done !

And from the Paradisal glade  
Within the Border-Land,  
Some darling soul to soothe and aid  
May we too stretch a hand !

## THE CORONATION OF DANTE.

IN the heart of the Lily City.

Would they crown him ere he die,  
In San Giovanni the beauteous,  
With the garland of victory?

Victory bloodless and glorious  
From the silent fields of thought ;  
Yet ever by tears and by travail  
In the mart of affliction bought.

For the price of that wreath of glory,  
Of the joys an hundred-fold ;  
Is a measure of bitter weeping,  
And a mine of the spirit's gold.

Who run in that race unvanquished,  
Who faithfully reach that goal,  
But reach it with sweat and with penance,  
And the bleeding feet of the soul.

For who climb up that awful mountain  
Fall often, but rise again—  
Yet who, on the perilous journey  
E'er sighed for the peace of the plain?

And think ye repose is awaiting  
'Neath the shadow of the bays,  
Or the requiems of evening mingling  
With the tumult of this world's praise?

'Tis the triumph of tears and of genius  
When they crown the pale sad brows—  
Long ago was their bridal morning,  
Nor was sorrow a faithless spouse.

They will crown him, aye, they will crown him  
When the silent waves are past,  
When nor tempest nor tear can ruffle  
Nor the lightning of praise can blast.

And that is the true coronation  
Thou never shalt see, O Soul!  
Even then is thy full consecration,  
And that wreath is thine aureole.

Thou didst crown thy beautiful city,  
Thou didst pour on her sons thy dowers ;  
But never with palm and with triumph,  
And not in that city of Flowers

Did they bid the soft wreath of glory  
O'er the mournful brows entwine :—  
But they waited till all was over,  
Then turned and called thee Divine.

## SUNDAY AFTERNOON.

I SHALL think of thee at thy cottage door,  
    Mine own familiar friend—  
Above thy seat the china rose  
    Her loving buds shall bend.

Thou art not there to feel their scent,  
    Nor peep thro' dark green leaves  
At stranger birds, who find a home  
    Beneath thy cottage eaves.

Thy knitting lies neglected now  
    Upon the window seat ;  
But greater works than thine have been  
    Unfinished, incomplete !

Thy eight-day clock, to-morrow night,  
    Shall cease her patient song ;  
Ere hands shall wind her up again  
    I fear it will be long.

Thy Bible, marked at "God is love"—  
A flower in Jacob's dream—  
Is lying where the golden rays  
From northern sunsets gleam.

And, gazing on the shining page,  
Doth tenderly recall  
The afternoon half heaven, half earth,  
Of Sunday's festival.

Thou hadst not very much, old friend,  
But what thou hadst is there ;  
These seem a portion of thyself,  
Thy work, thy book, thy chair.

I have a memory of thee  
Dear as familiar tune,  
Of thee and our sweet festival  
On Sunday afternoon.

Thy life it was an old-world life,  
Thy ways were old-world ways ;  
Thy home a garden of repose  
In these fast modern days.

'Tis not the great and glorious gifts  
That soothe young hearts and win ;  
'Tis not the wild and rapturous loves  
That are untouched by sin.

Oh, kind the love of thy old heart !  
For well it knew how soon  
I would be where 'tis hard to keep  
The Sunday afternoon !

Old friend, I go to strange new lands,  
I seek a strange new home,  
But aye to me I only pray  
The thought of thee may come.

Still would I feel thy warm fireside,  
Still breathe the pink rose leaves ;  
Still envy birds their summer home  
Beneath thy cottage eaves ;

And dream about thy old-world ways,  
The fragrance of thy tea ;  
The little dainties thou would'st store  
For Sunday and for me !

And see afar the sun-lit page  
If doubt my spirit chill ;  
For "God is Love," and Jacob's dream  
With hopes of Heaven shall thrill.

While o'er the dirge and wail of life  
Shall sound an angel's tune ;  
Thy voice that spoke of heaven and God  
On Sunday afternoon.

To that new world I fain would take  
Bright memories of the old ;  
Until, like thee, I gathered be  
Into th' eternal fold.

And thro' the mists of grief will shine  
The heather hills of home ;  
Till to the mountain of our God  
Those weary feet may come.

'Then shall thy well-belovèd voice,  
That old familiar tune,  
Ring thro' the Sabbaths evermore  
Of Heaven's afternoon.

## THE DEATH OF AARON.

“Moses did as the Lord had commanded : and they went up into Mount Hor before all the multitude. And when he had stript Aaron of his vestments, he vested Eleazar his son with them. And Aaron being dead in the top of the mountain, he came down with Eleazar.”

FOR the last time he lit the sacred light,  
Round his worn feet the small bells sweetly peal;  
Then turning to yon lone and mournful height,  
Did faith and love the obedient spirit seal;  
Did flesh and blood shrink from that mountain's  
crown,  
While o'er the signet stones hot tears fell down?

Was there no tent in Israel's goodly camp  
Where that old head might gently rest and die,  
No death-bed save yon pillow chill and damp,  
Whose curtains are the storm-clouds of the sky;  
Or prayed he but one dying glance to throw  
On brighter hills where milk and honey flow?

His was no lot by perfumed breezes fanned,  
His part to serve where joys of earth grow pale ;  
His hope the promise of a far-off Land,  
His privilege to pass within the Veil,  
And year by year, before the Mercy Seat,  
Where Seraphs bend, with Israel's God to meet.

Tears of the desert, memories of sin,  
No darkening shadow o'er those last hours throw:  
To-night he shall a better Canaan win,  
In Abraham's Bosom full forgiveness know ;  
Where radiant souls like fixed stars scintillate,  
And, learning Heaven's own songs, doth Miriam  
wait.

'Twas the last walk on Earth, in silence still  
The two great Brethren saw the certain goal,  
The appointed death-bed on the mist-veiled hill,  
And knew the time had come when soul leaves  
soul.

Long had they journeyed, hand in faithful hand,  
Now each must reach alone that Promised Land.

Three left the Camp of God, three climbed the steep,  
Three rested on the awful mountain's crown ;

But one was laid in solitary sleep,

And two, two only to the world came down :  
So o'er our dying eyes may dear ones bend,  
But one alone through death's dark vale will wend.

O mountain death-bed ! where the pale stars shine ;

O Sacristy ! in dazzling robes of light  
One passes vested to an earthly shrine,  
One to the Vision of the Infinite ;  
One to adore with silent Cherubim,  
And one to join the living creature's hymn.

Soon, soon our cast-off vestures others don,

Our vacant places others quickly fill ;  
Another king is ready for the throne,  
And other hands the unfinished pastures till.  
Without us shall the Temple prove as bright ;  
And Eleazar trims the lamps to-night.

Thy task is o'er, God's High Anointed Priest,

The Ephod and the Signet Stones lay down ;  
Leave now the Show Bread for the Heavenly Feast,  
The Mitre for the sacerdotal Crown.

“Farewell, O Brother, tarry not, but come !”

“All Hail, O Sister, in our Father's Home !”

## VALETUDINARIAN.

“ Per languores tuos, Libera nos Jesu.”

THERE are grand sorrows, sparkling like bright gems,  
And agonies serene,  
That set upon pale brows their diadems,  
By men and angels seen.

She who doth wear these crowns may turn aside  
From this world's humbler cares,  
And in white robes be tended as a bride ;  
While special, fervent prayers

Are offered for her patience or her health  
At the High Mercy-Seat—  
Oh, but such sorrow is exceeding wealth,  
! And thorns so sharp are sweet.

But, day by day to bear this unsung pain,  
Without an aureole,  
Aches in the limbs, and mists around the brain,  
And sadness in the soul !

With weary hands that fain would downward fall,  
Yet must no rest require ;  
With feet for whom the dusty path doth pall,  
Yet scarce may seem to tire.

Ah me ! to see the mighty fields a-glow,  
And reap no golden sheaves !  
To see the trees with burdens bending low,  
And pluck but withered leaves.

Oh, for the health to bear the reaper's toil,  
To bring bright harvests in !  
Oh, for the strength to break the barren soil,  
To root the briars of sin !

Then were there hope to light for evermore  
The firmament Divine ;  
And then were glorious recompense in store  
Within the central shrine.

Peace, murmuring soul ! hath not thy faithful Lord  
For the least good deed done  
Promised a certain and sublime reward,  
When the dull race is run ?

And, who hath measured out thy fields of strife?

One sheaf of purest grain  
For the vast garner of eternal life  
May valleys sow again.

Ere yet upon the King's High Dolorous Way  
Suffered the Son of God,  
By paths unknown, thro' many a languid day  
The Sacred Feet had trod.

Perfect in vigour, and in health serene,  
Did He not bear for thee  
Cold dews upon the olive mountain green,  
Hot suns by Galilee.

For thee by Jacob's Well, all faint and low,  
'Neath noon of Palestine,  
He wearied, and for thee He did forego  
The proffered myrrh and wine.

Not for reward, but for His love, toil on,  
Bring talents of fine gold ;  
And lovelier than the shades of Lebanon  
The wings that round thee fold.

And not in envyings, but in deeds abound—

The saints before thee press ;

Thy pale stars yet 'mid theirs may circle round

The realms of righteousness.

## THE ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN.

ONWARD, onward, onward,  
On the wings of the sons of Light,  
By the horses and chariots of Israel,  
To the home of the Infinite.

Nearer, nearer, nearer,  
Till our feeble vision is dim,  
When thou reachest thy zenith of glory,  
Past the thrones of the Seraphim.

Deeper, deeper, deeper,  
In the tide of the boundless sea,  
Till the crystalline waters have closed  
O'er depths where we follow not thee.

Blessed, blessed, blessed,  
By thine awful maternity ;  
But even more gloriously blessed  
By thy beautiful sanctity.

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Onward, onward, onward,  
Till the Veil of the Temple hides  
The highest of Heaven's own creatures,  
The foremost of Heaven's own brides.

Vanishing, vanishing, vanishing,  
In the mists of the heights above ;  
But seen still by the children of Jesus,  
O mother of Grace and of Love.

## FLORENCE.

GARDEN of God, thou church for ever blessed  
Santa Maria of the sacred flowers ;  
By reverent saints and Seraphim caressed,  
Hymns are thy breezes, gifts of Heaven thy  
showers ;  
Fair Eden, wherein winged ones adore,  
But stretch no sword thy wide-spread portals o'er.

Spirit in stone ! thy sentinel watch art keeping  
O'er the bright city clustered at thy feet :  
And he who fashioned thee from toil and weeping  
Hath passed to a better city's street,  
Where the pure walls with grace and sapphire  
shine,  
And winged architects build domes Divine.

Dear unto me yon church for ever youthful,  
For ever virgin through time-stainèd years ;

While Heaven's own Queen, with earnest eyes and  
truthful,

Is gazing from the unclouded hemispheres ;  
And favoured arms her son and God entwine  
Meet Bridal of the human and Divine.

O Santa Croce, thou art grave and olden !

The earthy vestures of our sons of light  
Thou treasurest, and thy very dust is golden :

There sleep the immortals till day chase the night.  
Hushed be our voice, and reverent our tread  
In yon dim dwelling of the crownèd dead.

Thou dear San Marco ! I have imaged faintly

The Angelic painter at his task Divine.  
Faith, hope, and love hath left his soul most saintly,  
Still gleaming in the immemorial shrine :  
And now that Soul in quiet cloister dwells,  
The grave and Paradise his guarded cells.

San Miniato ! when church bells were calling,

How often, in the wintry afternoon,  
Like raindrops o'er the Lily City falling  
Seemed the last Angelus' unearthly tune ;

And in the music of each solemn bell  
The voice of Mary and of Gabriel.

Grave Antonino, gentle Reparata,  
And O ye servants of the Mother Maid,  
Ye who within the fair Annunziata  
Water the lilies of the sacred glade ;  
O Saints at rest, O souls amid the strife  
Pray for us that we reach the bowers of life !

O Lily City ! still thou art appealing  
To me, and wilt appeal for evermore :—  
By him before his toil in calm prayer kneeling  
As he would with his hand and heart adore ;  
By his crowned brow, so mournful and so tender,  
Sorrow and glory in his diadem ;  
By feet at rest on many a mount of splendour,  
Close to the gates of New Jerusalem ;  
By waving palms in hands to praise uplifted,  
By eyes undazzled in the Light of Light,  
By souls from sin and grief remotely drifted  
To the deep ocean of the Infinite ;  
By thine own glorious, beautiful Madonna,  
The Virgin Mother and the Spirit's Spouse,

Kneeling before her God, while her corona  
By Hands Divine is placed on human brows ;  
By him who once upon Alverna's mountain  
Was sealed with the sorrows of the Rood,  
And then o'er Umbria poured a living fountain,  
Till earthly art was with Heaven's grace imbued ;  
By all, O Lily City, thou hast spoken,  
Hast spoken and wilt speak for evermore,  
Oh, may the peerless spell be never broken,  
And may I ne'er unlearn the holy lore !  
Where'er this world hath been by Heaven caressed,  
Still on her mournful face the kiss is left ;  
Still with glad memories her lips are blessed,  
Nor of pure raptures is her soul bereft.  
All is not gone, nor all the old Faith shattered,  
All is not squandered of the glorious dowers,  
From faded petals still the dust is scattered,  
O City ! Lily City of the Flowers !

## FLOWERS, PALMS, CROWNS, STARS, AND THE CROSS.

“For that which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory.”

THE Flowers of the Blessed grow  
On the Mountain of Paradise :  
They were sown down here with prayer and tear  
’Neath the ceiling of “weeping skies.”

The Palms of the Blessed wave,  
Clasped tight in each holy hand—  
But the parent tree of these branches free  
Stood once in life’s desert sand.

The Crowns of the Blessed gleam  
At last on each brow of light—  
But the crown of thorn was meekly worn  
Ere these cinctures soft and bright.

The Stars of the Blessed flash  
In the firmament Divine—  
But pain and loss, and the bitter cross  
Made these fixed stars brighter shine.

O flowers that are growing now !  
O trees in the scorching sand !  
O crowns of thorn on these brows forlorn  
O cross in the pale, tired hand !

Who would ask for flowers less fair,  
Or covet a poorer palm,  
Or wish one gem from his diadem,  
One note from his triumph psalm,

One ray from his fixed star's light,  
In its primal magnitude ;—  
Or who would miss one burden of bliss  
In his soul's Beatitude ?

## THE HOLY SOULS.

“They are Thine, O Lord, who lovest souls.”

THE blessed 'mid the vanished lives—

How glorious is the thought become

That they are in the outer court

Of the eternal, awful Home !

That they have entered even now

Into that region dim and vast,

For them the balances are weighed,

For them the die of life is cast.

They shall not hunger now, nor thirst,

They shall not sorrow now, nor sin,

For grief and wickedness ne'er yet

Have passed that frontier realm within.

The poor world, since they went away,

Hath changed, perchance, her anxious face ;

Empires have risen, empires fallen,

But they are resting from the race.

Oh, they who through these thousand years  
Have known the intermediate land,  
Its secrets and its mysteries,  
How do they fully understand !  
Is there a shadowy, winding path  
Wherein their feet have never trod,  
Is there a grace in them not grown  
To fit the creature for its God ?  
And these poor, new-come, trembling souls,  
How doth the unfamiliar place  
Bewilder by its mystic groves  
And landscapes lit by pallid grace !  
Fresh from their death-bed's agony,  
By grief and absolution freed  
From many a sin of wayward youth,  
How will they in this hour of need  
Expect some anxious, faithful friend,  
Some dear one lately from them riven,  
To guide the unaccustomed feet  
Into this vestibule of Heaven !  
O Spirit Land, O Spirit Land,  
Thou spring-tide of the sons of grace,  
Where saints are gradually prepared  
For Vision of their Saviour's Face ;

From earth's bleak winter entered now  
    Into this keen but tranquil air,  
For summer of eternity  
    They sigh with purifying prayer.  
Shall lowly souls in penal waves  
    Be beautified and glorified,  
Shall stubborn natures tarry there  
    Till memory of sin hath died?  
No torment hurts the Holy Souls,  
    No grief assails the happy good,  
But calmly, in a Father's Hand,  
    They wait their full Beatitude.  
And sometimes have the listening souls  
    Heard requiems from the church below,  
Beneath the choirs angelical,  
    Above the wails of mortal woe ;  
And swifter glides the tranquil dawn,  
    And light and bliss even then increase—  
Sweet words from hearts that love them still,  
    “Lord, grant them Thine Eternal peace.”  
How restful are the Holy Souls !  
    From doubt and darkness they are free,  
Since they can never fall away  
    Through a serene eternity.

How weary are the Holy Souls !

Deferrèd is the perfect bliss ;

They hold their triumph in their arms,

But may not touch it with their kiss.

And in their chastisement have they

Been soothèd through the ages dim

By echo, ever waxing clear,

Of Sanctus of the Seraphim.

And, sometimes for the Holy Souls

Hath been unbarred the Great White Door,

And they have seen fair visions flit

Across their Mansion's shining floor ;

And saints have strained their wearied eyes,

With longings unto Jesus known,

To see their vesture's loveliness,

To count the jewels in their crown ;

While, as a breath from lands Divine,

Hath poured down a grateful breeze,

A rustle of angelic wings

Hath stirred the woods of Paradise.

And sometimes have the clouds unrolled,

And the Great New Jerusalem,

The wondrous City of our God,

Hath flashed like passing diadem —

Meet but for Heaven—accustomed sight,

Too strong for these expectant eyes,

Yet hath that coming city's glance.

Refreshed the sons of Paradise.

O Holy Souls, O vanished lives,

Pray for us, as for ye we pray,

That our to-morrow be with God

Remember each sad yesterday !

O jewels 'neath the hammer laid,

O silver 'finèd in the fire ;

O hearts, quick burning night and day,

Enkindled by intense desire ;

O hands, uplifted in long prayer,

O fettered, eager, willing feet,—

That shall flow o'er the harp strings there,

That shall run through that city's street !

O Saints in quiet harbour now,

Pray for us, as for ye we pray—

May our To-morrow be with God,

Through cycles of Eternity !

## FOR BETTER, FOR WORSE.

For Better, aye, my life hath better been  
    Since first I knew thy soul and kissed thy face,  
And took thee, tender, true, and most serene,  
    To run with me life's little mournful race.  
Since thou hast passed the threshold of my door,  
    Since thou unto my wilderness hast come,  
All hath been better than it was before,  
    Then a new glory lit a happy home ;  
And brighter still each hearth sun rose and shone,  
And all life's music was love's monotone.

“ For Worse, ah, have we met ? ” I said, when thou  
    Didst leave me, hearkening to a higher call,  
And I, with bleeding heart and tortured brow  
    Wept in mine anguish by thy flower-strewn pall ;  
Then knew I in my bitterness of soul,  
    For thee 'tis Better, but 'tis Worse for me,

Left far behind when thou hast reached the goal,  
How shall these weary feet ere follow thee  
To that Hereafter, to that Holy Land  
Whence thou art stretching still thine unseen hand.

But oh, "for Better" shall I say again,  
If, haply in that land where all is best,  
Where links are joined in each severed chain,  
I meet thee 'mid the beautiful and blest,  
Thou at the threshold of the golden street,  
Shalt bid me through the silent River come ;  
And may I speed with no reluctant feet  
To hail thee in thy Father's Better Home.  
"For Better" shall I say where all is best,  
In the calm regions of eternal rest.

## JEPHTE'S DAUGHTER.

“Therefore the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephte . . . He made a vow to the Lord, saying: ‘If Thou wilt deliver the children of Ammon into my hands, whosoever shall first come forth out of the doors of my house, and shall meet me when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, the same will I offer a holocaust to the Lord.’”

LITTLE dreaming of the issues,  
Did the warrior make his vow,  
When, with hope to shield his bosom,  
And with pride to deck his brow,  
He declared “If thou wilt give me  
O’er Thy foes the victory,  
Whoso meets me on my threshold  
I will offer unto Thee.”

And, triumphant in his glory,  
He returned at set of sun,  
For from Aroer unto Abel  
Of the Vineyards he had won :

But he recked not of the struggle,  
Nor the price in battle paid,  
For he thought in Maspha's gardens  
Of one little dark-eyed maid.

And that one, who spread his table  
'Neath the ceiling of the vine ;  
She was lovelier than the lilies  
In the Plains of Palestine ;  
She the ewe-lamb of his homestead,  
She the one bird of his nest,  
And he longed to feel her burden  
On the pillow of his breast.

He was stern, and wild, and ruthless,  
He was but a man of war ;  
O'er the storm of his existence  
Shone her light as morning star ;  
And like rays her gentle goodness  
On his rugged pathway fell,  
And he yearned to see her clasp her babes  
'Mid the wives of Israel.

Now the golden sheets of sunset  
Are outspread by angel hand,

*Jephthé's Daughter.*

While the curtains of the twilight  
Fold around the vine-clad land,  
And the conqueror hasteneth homeward  
With his proud triumphal throng,  
When, upon the gale of evening,  
Floats an old familiar song.

Nearer, nearer wafts the music !  
Are these notes from harps divine,  
Or hath Miriam waked to warble  
On the hills of Palestine ?  
Sweeter, sweeter, and more home-like  
Grows the pastoral serene—  
What are sparkling, what are flashing  
As the dewdrops crystalline ?  
Have white doves from Heaven alighted  
On the inmost emerald rim ?  
He who crushed the Sons of Ammon  
Felt that one had conquered him.

There was wailing in his triumph,  
There was darkness in his home ;  
And she laid aside her timbrel,  
For she knew her hour was come ;

And her little tasks, unfinished,  
    She concealèd from his eyes,  
For she said, "Did he behold them,  
    He would grudge his sacrifice."

Then she called her companions,  
    And she said "Come forth with me,  
And bewail me, fruitless, barren,  
    In my lone virginity!"  
And she said when she departed  
    From the threshold of his door,  
"O my father, who will tend thee  
    When I go for evermore?"

Oh, that bitter, mournful journey!  
    Oh, that awful coming home!  
And the thought that he who waited  
    For the last time saw her come!  
Oh, her peaceful resignation!  
    Oh, that brief and hopeless strife!  
Oh, his cursèd, drooping banners!  
    Oh, that wail o'er wasted life!  
Hills of Aroer and of Abel  
    Ye beheld the red campaign,

And the twenty cities burning,  
And the torn and blasted plain ;  
But the hills and glens of Gilead,  
Saw the bitterer strife of one  
Who was lovelier than the lilies,  
Who was brighter than the Sun.

Tell us, O ye glens of Gilead,  
Was there balm amid thy bowers,  
When the tears of Jephthe's daughter  
Fell like raindrops on thy flowers ?  
Tell us, O ye Orient sunsets,  
O ye nights of Palestine,  
O'er the pillow of the dying  
Did ye kindly, pitying shine ?  
In the warrior's ruined homestead,  
Where the lamps of life burn dim,  
By the altar of his promise,  
Was there one to pity him,  
When the light fled from her footsteps,  
And the laughter from her eyes,  
From the hills and glens of Gilead  
Came the virgin sacrifice ?

## HEADACHE.

OH, I have worn thee, thou weary crown !

Through the long watches of the sleepless hours,  
And thought of her in yon old Tuscan town

Who loved thee rather than the wreath of flowers ;

And mused of martyr's tears and virgin's love,

And the brave hearts that shrank not from the  
Rood ;

And said, "This is a gift from Heaven above,

And all things work together for my good."

But chiefly, I have imaged, pale and worn,

That Face whose vision shall be Heaven's own  
bliss ;

So patient 'neath the diadem of thorn,

As erst to meet the traitor's chilling kiss.

Perchance, if 'twere some grand, uncommon grief  
The world would pity, and its science cure,—  
But this I know, I only find relief  
In thinking what my Saviour did endure.

Oh, thou art glorified, thou wreath of pain,  
Since for great grace to bear thee I must pray,  
Asking for patience o'er and o'er again ;  
Else craving that the grief be taken away.

My weeping eyes are with their anguish dim,  
My thoughts are wandering, and my brain is  
dark :

My lips can utter now nor prayer nor hymn,—  
Lord, through the midnight guide Thy fragile ark.

O dearest Lord ! my times are in Thy hand—  
Soon bid the cooling breezes round me steal ;  
From the fair pastures of health's heavenly land,  
Send angels ministering to soothe and heal.

For sickness or for health, I am thine own,  
I offer, yet not choose the sacrifice—  
I am the altar, and before Thy throne  
May fragrance from my joys or sorrows rise.

Only be done in me, adorèd Will—

Only, O crown, for Jesus' sake be worn ;

And may I know, when life's wild waves are still,

The hidden sweetness of this crown of thorn !

## THE POET'S HOUR.

WHEN will inspiration come ?

Since thou knowest not, beware—  
Son of Light, thine awful home  
Is not here, but it is There,  
There where setting suns unfold  
Emerald thrones and streets of gold.

Will it come on Tabor's rim,  
When the glory round thee pours,  
When the everlasting Hymn  
Echoes thro' the unclosing doors,  
When another Son of Light  
Meets thee on the star-crowned height ?

Will it come when some pale moon,  
Like the spirit of a saint,  
Glideth thro' the woods of June,  
Whispering secrets, pure and faint,

To the flowers within their leaves,  
To the birds beneath their eaves?

Or, perchance, at midnight hour,  
    When a heavenly dream hath sent  
Thoughts in a celestial shower  
    From the spirit's firmament—  
Thoughts the angels understand,  
Sprinkling all the parched land?

Or when earthly care downweighs,  
    And from thy beclouded heart  
Even the memory of praise  
    Hath been tempted to depart  
'Mid the haunts of grief and sin  
Shall some saintly song begin?

In a moment, night or day,  
    May awake the slumbering fire,  
Called from our spheres away  
    To thy place in yon bright choir.  
Keep thy spirit white and fair,  
Garrisoned by faith and prayer.

In the depth of lowliest toil,  
    Since great things are sought of thee  
May no ill thy white robes soil,  
    And no tempests toss thy sea.  
Keep before thee that dread hour  
    When thy Lord shall ask again—  
Multiplied His glorious dower,  
    Mayst thou bring the talents ten ;  
And thy spirit find its rest  
Mid the anthems of the blest.

## MOUNT MORIAH.

“Benedicite montes et colles Domino.”

O SINAI, awful, immemorial steep !

O Lebanon how white thy virgin breast !

Nebo and Hor where saints were laid to sleep.

Tabor and Horeb infinitely blest !

Ye dedicated hills ! and hallowed thou

Moriah, mount of terror and of sighs ;

Where favoured saints have climbed, are climbing  
now,

But few return without the sacrifice.

But few for many must the gift restore,

Give back to Heaven the long-desired child ;

With their own hands they close the nursery door,

And veil the happy eyes that o'er life smiled.

And lambs there are by all but Heaven unseen ;  
    White lambs for Jesus, Jesus doth provide  
High altars of pure sacrifice serene,  
    Ethereal summits where the cold mists hide.

Aye, there are Isaacs offered to the Lord ;  
    He sees the wood, the knife, our dying wills ;  
In His lachrymatory our tears are stored ;  
    No mists can hide from Heaven these holy hills.

Thou, who with quivering lips and halting pace  
    Hast with one other climbed that mountain  
    crown,  
Full of pure prayer and sacrificial grace,  
    Knowing that thou would'st all alone come down.

And there, while pitying stars behold thy strife,  
    Raising thine altar with obedient heart ;  
Touching scarce yet the inexorable knife,  
    Ere thou thy kiss of agony impart ;

With thy wild glance across the firmament,  
    The while the breeze of eve thy white face  
    fanned,

Did'st give to Heaven what Heaven to thee had  
lent,  
When Heaven's own voice said clearly, "Hold  
thine hand !"

Tell us, when once again that bosom breathed,  
And no false gleam lit up that opening eye,  
When round those lips a babe's quaint smile hath  
wreathed,  
Tell us, if thou canst tell, thine ecstasy !

Is there beneath God's Heaven supernal bliss,  
Refined as the silver in the fire,  
It is the rapture of that wakening kiss—  
No mother need to holier peace aspire.

If for one joy unfallen spirits crave,  
'Tis for that journey from Moriah's Crown,  
When in love's ocean, steeped beneath the wave,  
*Two*, hand in hand and heart in heart, come  
down.

## TO THE PHŒNIX.

O PHŒNIX, Bird of Paradise !

For half a thousand years

Thou must dwell alone on thine ancient throne,

For thou canst have no peers.

Yet, in thy groves of Araby,

Hast thou ne'er longed to be

The lowliest little sparrow-hawk

Perched on a hedgerow tree ?

O Phoenix, Bird of Paradise !

Thy fate was ne'er to lie

In a cosy nest 'neath a downy breast

With little brethren by ;

For the parent thou hast never known

To the city of the sun

Thou must bear away, and that funeral day

Sees thine orphan life begun.

O Phoenix, Bird of Paradise !

In what ærial bowers

Dost thou hold thy state without a mate,

A hundred thousand hours :

Yet the splendours of thy silent throne

Wouldst thou not give to see

Another Bird of Paradise

Waiting to sing to thee ?

O Phoenix, Bird of Paradise !

How beautiful thou art !

And thy pinions bright are soft and light,

That wave o'er thy poor lone heart :

Yet all thy beauty, and all thy grace

Wouldst thou not give to see

Some little Birds of Paradise

Waiting to chirp to thee ?

O Phoenix, Bird of Paradise !

Faded and old art thou,

And thy drooping plume to thy longed-for tomb,

Doth wearily bear thee now :

Yet nigh to Heliopolis,

To the altar of the sun,

Dost thou sigh, perchance, for but one glance  
Of thy coming little one ?

The only nest thou mayst ever make  
Is thine own spicy bier,  
Still be thy sleep, and none to weep,  
O Bird without a peer !  
In lonely splendour thou hast lived,  
A lonely death is nigh—  
O Phoenix, Bird of Paradise !  
How sweet it is to die !

## THE LESSONS OF THE LIFE OF JONAS.

“Now the Lord prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonas,  
. . . and the Lord God prepared an ivy, and it came up over  
the head of Jonas, to be a shadow over his head, and to cover  
him, for he was fatigued, and Jonas was exceeding glad of the  
ivy. But God prepared a worm . . . and it struck the ivy  
and it withered.”

THERE is no peaceful glade Thou hast not decked ;  
And when we shrink beneath the bitter rod,  
When in wild seas of grief all life seems wrecked,  
Yet somewhere is the Paradise of God.

There is no fish at sport in life's mid-ocean,  
Swallowing at random up our treasured bliss ;  
'Tis Heaven would prove even here sublime devo-  
tion,  
Then draw us from the horrible abyss.

But not to rest, the soul's beleagured city  
     Doth wait us, and our place is in its street ;  
 Heaven claims faith, hope, and love, our brother's  
     pity,  
     And Nineveh our toiling hands and feet.

And yet beneath the moon are bowers supernal,  
     And broad-leaved trees where we may rest  
     awhile,  
 Foretastes in leafless time of glades eternal,  
     Brief summer moments spent 'neath God's own  
     smile.

But not on earth is tree so safely planted  
     That it can never storm or canker know ;  
 And to no fireside is the promise granted  
     That hearts shall beat for ever in its glow—

O ye great, overwhelming, drowning sorrows !  
     O citadels of sin we shrink to storm !  
 O ye calm rests, deep set in far to-morrows !  
     O little troubles' cruel, devouring worm !

Hail to ye all ! ye gifts of Heaven's appointing !

    Come not amiss, since Heaven hath bid ye come,  
Prove each a drop in each true soul's anointing,  
    To fit it for its tearless, changeless home.

## AN OBITUARY.

HE died in the pride and the splendour  
Of beautiful vigorous life ;  
He was called his arms to surrender,  
And marched from the midst of the strife.  
From a hearth without a sorrow,  
By a flower-strewn, though narrow way,  
To the strange home of to-morrow  
Through the gates of a glad to-day.

He died—he was old and was weary ;  
For his eyes with their age were dim :  
And beneath it was cold and dreary,  
And above was a peopled rim.  
There all whom he loved were dwelling,  
But down here was no brother's face ;  
And often his lips were telling  
He was tired of the lonely race.

She died in her virginal beauty,  
A creature of light and of love :  
Her brief life was all prayer and duty,  
And her soul as the ark's own dove.  
The angels came down to meet her,  
And her friends from the faultless throng  
Were ready with crowns to greet her,  
And to teach her a strange new song

He died, and the hot tears fell thickly  
As he lay on his baby bier,  
Then said one who was old and sickly,  
"He is gone ; I am left still here !"  
His lips had just learnt to falter,  
And two small feet were taught to stand,—  
They sought a lamb for the altar,  
A flower for the Holy Land.

O Death ! thy ways are mysterious,  
And thy garners our sheaves must fill ;  
Thy law is a law imperious,  
And thy will is an iron will.

Thou dost reap for thine adorning  
In winter, in spring, and in June ;  
For them 'tis the bridal morning,  
But for us the lone afternoon.

## POMPEII.

THERE is a street, a beautiful street,  
    Whence the citizens are fled—  
YET we hear the beat of their vanished feet  
    In that silent town of the dead.

TELL me a tale, O ye ruined rooms,  
    O tell me a tale to-day ;  
WHILE the sunshine illumines the sultry glooms  
    In the dwellings of slow decay.

I would not the voice of a sibyl grim,  
    But laugh 'mid the laughing throng,  
BRING an echo dim of Apollo's Hymn  
    In the House of the Son of Song.

EVEN still I can hear the lyre's faint tunes  
    Around the Peristyle sweep,  
THROUGH dreamy noons and 'neath amorous moons,  
    Alluring to love or to sleep.

Oh "Salve ! Salve !" on yon bright floor,  
But none to stretch forth a hand ;  
For for evermore from their own kind door  
They have passed to a peopled land.

Dainty and fair are these scorched bowers  
That circle the Atrium wide—  
O ye little night bowers, say what blossoming  
flowers  
Did there once 'neath thy curtains hide ?

Were these wedding rings ? Who owned them ?  
Were they gifts, or bought or sold ?  
From whose diadem hath fallen down this gem ?  
Whose brow did it light of old ?

And whose was this altar, once so bright ?  
Though poor were the gods they knew ;  
Ere the One True Light o'er the Gentile's night  
The long rays of its glory threw.

Is yon the sweet Xystus ? Ah, but now  
Whereto are the gardeners fled ?  
For no hands to sow and no plants to grow  
In the chilly groves of the dead.

Still the Triclinium's pale walls shine,  
There Bacchanals laugh and leap ;  
And ivy and vine are the wreaths that twine,  
But the revellers have fallen fast asleep.

Is this the Home of the Vestal Maids ?  
They dwell in a temple higher—  
In cloistered glades of the peaceful Shades  
They are feeding the Sacred Fire.

Is this the Forum ? the throbbing heart  
Of business, of loss, and gain—  
But they need no part in exchange or mart  
Where the moons cannot wax nor wane.

Whose is this grave that was cherished fair,  
Whose darling was laid to sleep ?  
Oh, the blank despair of the heathen's prayer  
But the mourners have ceased to weep.

O homes, O hearths, but graves are ye all !  
O languid life of a day !  
Say what hand let fall the fierce red pall  
That hath hidden that life away ?

Oh "Salve ! Salve !" time dare not chase,  
Then "Vale !" vast grave to thee—  
For thou hast the grace of a dear dead face,  
Thou dead city beside the sea !

And, oft as our quivering lips bewail,  
When we speak with bated breath,  
Ere we draw the veil o'er the features pale,  
There awakeneth the smile of death.

Life's joy is there, life's sorrow we miss,  
Dead city beside the sea,  
With the awful bliss of that long last kiss,  
Oh Vale ! Oh Vale to thee !

Street of the Dead, O thou beautiful street,  
What power hast thou still to win !  
We can hear the beat of those vanished feet  
Though Olympus hath taken them in.

O Homes of the Dead, O shrines laid low !  
O pitiless funeral pyre !  
Who hath laid ye low in flames and in woe ?  
Thou canst tell, thou cruel Mount of Fire !

And still to our souls the lesson comes

All ye who to life aspire,

When ye build bright homes 'neath the sunny  
domes,

Oh, remember the Mount of Fire !

SHE IS TWENTY YEARS TO-DAY.

“SHE is twenty years to-day,” he said,

“She is twenty years to-day”—

His face was white, his brow was worn,

His eyes looked far away.

“She is twenty years to-day,” he said,

“For she was just sixteen

When she was taken to Paradise

And Leven’s kirkyard green.

Oh, think not I forget her years

Though there be no time there ;

And deem not that her lot hath passed

Beyond her father’s prayer !

“In desert of my Life,” he said,

“A pale rose bloomed alone ;

The reaper came at matin hour

When fairest flowers are mown.

And think ye I know not my flower  
Amid the garnered sheaves ?  
How surely doth her grace unfold,  
How spread her virgin leaves !

Unscorched by sun, ne'er drenched by showers,  
Touched by no spot or stain ;  
Beneath the Tree of Paradise  
These roses bloom again.

This is her birthday, and I lay  
Upon the altar stair,  
With quiet grief, my birthday gift—  
A father's voiceless prayer

For her full light and perfect rest  
In Paradise of God ;  
For me that I may follow fast  
The narrow path she trod.

At altar of the Church above  
She does a true child's part,  
And asks for me, in life's lone way,  
A patient, perfect heart.'

'Tis well that for our own dear saints  
     May faithful requiems rise ;  
 For prayers, when other links have failed,  
     Are gifts to Paradise.

The far-off land is nearer now,  
     And from their bowers of bliss  
 The longing saints will pray for us—  
     Each prayer a spirit's kiss.

“ She is twenty years to-day,” he said,  
     “ She is twenty years to-day ”—  
 His face was white, his brow was worn,  
     His eyes looked far away.

## LOSS AND GAIN.

WELL loves the world her prosperous son,  
And glorifies success ;  
And, when her golden heights are won,  
She condescends to bless.

Two brothers start on manhood's race  
With promise bright and true ;  
Still sparkling on each sunny face  
The font's celestial dew.

For one the scroll of time unrolled  
Respect, success, and gain ;  
So ponderous was his garment's fold,  
No eye could see a stain.

He spoke in public, censed and fanned,  
Men marvelled and adored ;  
Philanthropies were in his hand,  
New schemes his mind had stored.

He was not narrow, no, but freed  
From rites, all sects revered ;  
Through seas of doubt beyond a creed,  
His phantom ship he steered.

Noble his works, and duly framed  
On the securest plan,  
That he should never be ashamed  
While doing good to man.

His brother's feet fell at the door,  
A life quite thrown away ;  
And every night cruel fingers tore  
The web he wove by day.

The world looked down with scornful eyes  
On utter failure, still  
He knew not in her hands the prize  
For them who climb the hill.

Whate'er he tried was folly dire ;  
Men said " A brainless fool ! "  
Yet was he learning wisdom higher,  
And in no earthly school.

He having little, little gave,  
Men called him poor and mean ;  
But cups filled at a heavenly wave  
The angels' eyes had seen.

His eloquence was never heard ;  
But weary souls could tell  
How oft his wise and gentle word  
Like God's own music fell.

In realms where winds of doubt blow cold,  
Beyond faith's veiled rim,  
He roamed not : the Church's Fold  
Was wide enough for him.

They died, and o'er one glorious tomb  
A marble image stood ;  
The world forgot where lilies bloom  
Beneath the Holy Rood.

One's welcome home no mortal heard ;  
Praise filled the air with din :  
A cloud of trophies upward soared ;  
None saw him enter in.

But by his Brother's place of rest  
A white form knelt alone,  
And saw a ransomed spirit blessed  
On the threshold of the Throne.

O glories of the world that fade  
Before the Eternal Weal !  
O Judgments of the world repaid !  
O Court whence no appeal !

## THE DEAD FACE OF ITALY.

O DEAR DEAD FACE ! there is no living face  
So lovely 'mid the lovely youthful lands ;  
Not one to woo with thy mysterious grace—  
And ye are warm and kind, O dear dead hands!

Imperial brows ! crowned with flower and gem  
Since first ye bent beneath Etruria's gold ;  
For many a fillet bright and diadem  
Rise sparkling o'er these trophies dim and old.

And still thy laurel wreaths are fresh and green,  
Fresh as the memory of thy mighty ones ;  
And still the world hath many a nook serene  
Lit by the radiance from thy central suns.

Flash on, ye garrulous, youthful, laughing realms !  
Grave Orient, tell us all that thou hast been !  
Wild West, with clamorous voice that overwhelms  
Ye are but deserts by our dear dead Queen.

Fade slowly, slowly, well-beloved face,  
What were the world without thee but a wild ?  
O Death ! with no rude hand her beauty chase,  
Earth guard thy dower for ever undefiled.

Is it thy olive groves, is it thy skies,  
Is it thy dark-eyed maids, dead sons of light,  
That make thee yet an earthly Paradise ?  
Is it thy sun-loved day, thy moon-wooded night ?

The City of the Soul, or of the Flowers—  
Perchance, the peerless City of the Sea,  
Hath lured, amid immeasurable dowers,  
Nations to circle round on prostrate knee.

What is it ? and we scarce can make reply—  
Tell us, what is it, O thou dear dead land ?  
We only know that thou art Italy,  
And they who love thee know and understand.

To name thee is as pleasant melody,  
The memory of thee is corn and wine—  
We only know that thou art Italy,  
The world's green garden and the heart's true  
shrine.

## ANNA'S SACRIFICE.

“ I also have lent him to the Lord all the days of his life.”

THY babe doth dwell apart, afar,  
Beside the golden Cherubim ;  
No little fret of home to jar  
With cadence of the Temple's hymn ;  
No mournful mists of earth to mar  
The splendours of the sun-steeped rim.

To rest so near the Light of Light—  
High portion for a child of thine ;  
To wear the ephod pure and white,  
To trim the lamps that ever shine  
Where presence of the Infinite  
Doth make the Holy Place Divine.

Yet, Hebrew mother, did no tear  
Ere trickle down thy dusky face ?  
Didst thou not long the day were near  
When thou might'st meet his brief embrace ?

And did no shade of doubt or fear  
Leave on thine earnest brow its trace ?

Perchance, with longing arms outspread  
To yon dear temple night and day,  
Thou saw'st, in dreams, two small feet led  
Along a strange and severed way ;  
And him who at thy bosom fed  
Kneel by an old priest's side to pray.

When on the little coat thy hand  
Its utmost toil and skill would prove,  
Deep musing of that holiest land,  
And him so far thy spheres above,  
Didst thou begin to understand  
What 'twas to lend, and yet to love ?

And, as the months would onward glide,  
What yearnings for the Mercy-Seat !  
What hastenings thou wast fain to hide,  
How eager grew thy restless feet  
To follow, by Elcana's side,  
Where thou thy darling one shouldst meet.

O happy years of answered prayer !  
O golden years without alloy !  
O sunny years, when all thy care  
Was lavished in thy sweet employ !  
And then thy lingering arms must tear  
From thy warm heart thy little boy.

So often, Lord, the long-sought bliss  
Wilt Thou at our true hearts desire :  
We may but touch it with our kiss,  
Then pass it on to portion higher ;  
Content, when we the dear voice miss,  
To know it joins the Angelic choir.

## CONVALESCENCE.

STRAIGHT from the darkened chamber where  
We deemed the toil of life was o'er,  
And, half regretful, heard the voice  
Of Death grow distant at the door,  
We turn with footsteps small and slow,—  
Familiar now with grief and pain,  
With languid limbs, and eager heart  
We seek the lovely world again.  
We turn to live, since we must live,  
Obedient to the Holy Will—  
Ah me, so sweet, so sad our rest  
Since last we faced life's rugged hill !  
Now, prostrate 'neath the ancient trees,  
Safe cloistered by the leafy zone,  
We taste the peace of Paradise,  
Ere sickness came undreamed, unknown.  
Then in our hearts no place for peace,  
'Mid hopes and fears, a restless throng—

Too wayward for our matin hymn,  
Too vigorous for our Evensong !  
What is this overwhelming joy  
The stricken frame is trembling thro',  
Till tears have wet the pallid cheek  
Like the first fall of evening dew,  
When on a heat exhausted world  
With love reviving touch it cheers ?  
So we have made ourselves rejoice  
Less by our laughter than our tears.  
My soul ! what shall their weeping be,  
If tears shall then their joy express,  
When life's long malady is o'er,  
They have no words their God to bless ?  
Within the Heavenly garden's groves,  
Whose sunshine is the Incarnate's smile,  
Earth's pain, one moment past and o'er,  
Shall alleluias then beguile ?  
The first strange hours, when, wondering, they  
For very love would fain be still,  
Nor yet could trust their dazzled eyes  
With vision of that face to fill—  
First taste of undisturbed rest,  
First glory of the unclouded Sun,

First moments of a strange new life  
In peace unspeakable begun !  
Who knoweth what that rest shall be  
That hath no rising up of fears ;  
Whose hearts beat ever to such joy,  
Whose eyes have ever shed such tears ?  
Yet is the curtain half withdrawn  
Above the waking of the blest,  
Since thou hast told us, dearest Lord,  
That for a season they shall rest.

## THE UNVEILING OF THE FAÇADE OF SANTA MARIA DEL FIORE.\*

WHAT peace was like a vision spread,  
What joy and thankfulness was ours !  
When stately did uplift her head  
Amid a thousand domes and towers,  
Work of the living and the dead,  
Santa Maria of the Flowers !  
While to and fro the tidings run,  
The work is done ! the work is done !

On our bowed heads fell down as dew  
The blessing of the pastoral hands ;  
Like sinless spirits o'er us flew  
The little, fluttering, wingèd bands,†

\* Santa Maria del Fiore, called also Santa Maria dei Fiori, the Cathedral of Florence, was founded on the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, 8th September 1298. The Façade was unveiled on May 12th 1887.

† Carrier pigeons.

And vanished in the ethereal blue,  
 To tell unto the listening lands  
 The work in faith and love begun  
 In faith and love was done, was done !

Aye, Bird of Peace, go forth again :  
 Hast thou not ta'en thy flight before,  
 When falling tides and ceasing rain  
 Told that the wrath of Heaven was o'er ?  
 Speed, lest our notes of triumph wane,  
 The first to leave yon western door,  
 To tell, ere this world's set of sun,  
 The work is done ! the work is done !

Ye folded hands, ye resting feet,  
 Ye disembodied, shriven souls,  
 Ye who long litanies repeat  
 That we too reach the peaceful goals,  
 Who wait beneath the Mercy-Seat  
 The kindling of the aureoles,  
 Know ye, the work ye have begun,  
 Our work and yours, the work is done !

Sant Antonino, did thy love  
 Awaken for thine ancient fold ?

O Reparata, hath some dove  
To thy white breast our triumph told?  
O all ye blessed saints above,  
Hath echo of our music rolled  
Through the long aisles where rest is won—  
The work is done ! the work is done !

O Shepherd Painter, didst thou gaze  
From pastures of eternal rest ;  
Thrice crowned singer, didst thou raise  
Amid the anthems of the blest,  
Far grander notes, sublimer praise  
Than earthly canticle expressed ;  
To tell the ransomed, one by one,  
The work is done ! the work is done !

Never did Mount of Lebanon,  
Snow-wreathed, and lit by Orient May,  
Look lovelier than thy face that shone  
Santa Maria ! and thy ray  
Flashed o'er the ages dead and gone  
As fair as on the stern to-day—  
No shadow veiled the virgin sun  
That morning when the work was done.

246 *The Façade of St Maria del Fiore.*

'Tis done ! 'tis done ! in faith unfeigned  
Complete the immemorial shrine :  
Yet, mortal, since thy hands are stained  
By sin, say not of work of thine  
'Tis done, for only One hath deigned  
For thee to finish work Divine—  
But One hath said, and only One,  
“'Tis finishèd !” the work is done !

Dear Lord, accept Thy children's gift,  
We offer Thine, not what is ours—  
O bid the clouds o'er Heaven unrift,  
And, 'mid the eternal domes and towers,  
May angel hands to Thee uplift  
Santa Maria of the Flowers.  
O King of Glory, who hast won  
Our Heaven, in Thee the work is done.

IN TEMPORE VESPERI ERIT LUX.

DID the young day her garlands weave  
    Around the tented homes,  
Or fell the splendours of the eve  
    On vine-clad mountain domes,  
Or slept the midnight silently  
    Above each prostrate band,  
When thou didst turn thine undimmed eye  
    Upon the Promised Land?  
O eyes that once through lotus flowers  
    From cradle ark did peep,  
While weary of the scorching hours,  
    Had Miriam stolen to weep :  
O eyes, wet with a babe's brief tears  
    On royal maiden's breast,  
Nor shrinking from the gorgeous years  
    Soothed 'mid her gems to rest ;  
O eyes the splendour could not daze  
    That girt the Pharaoh's throne,

For even in calm Osiris' blaze  
The true light never shone ;  
O eyes the long hard future scanned  
On Midian's hills at even,  
And first beheld the Promised Land  
Shine through the gates of Heaven ;  
O eyes that once on Sinai's brow  
Pierced straight the Veil within,  
But where yon rock's dark waters flow  
Burned over Israel's sin ;  
O eyes that see the vista far  
Of full a hundred years,  
No glow to gild, no mist to mar  
Life's long dead hopes and fears !  
At eventide it shall be light,  
The sins of day absolved—  
Lone saint, upon thy death-bed's height,  
Life's mystery evolved.  
Meekness and faith were thy rereward  
Before the Promised Land—  
At eventide, our Light, our Lord,  
Shall we too understand ?

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